

10TH ANNIVERSARY

THE GREENING OF THE PRESS • TOM WICKER

COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

MAY/JUNE 1971

**CABLE TV:
ENDANGERED REVOLUTION**

**THE UNDERGROUND PRESS:
AN APPRAISAL**

**THE MYTH OF
MEDIA POVERTY**
CANADIAN SENATE REPORT

... to assess the performance of journalism in all its forms, to call attention to its shortcomings and strengths, and to help define—or redefine—standards of honest, responsible service . . .
... to help stimulate continuing improvement in the profession and to speak out for what is right, fair, and decent.

COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

May/June, 1971

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Passing comment

Milestones

With this issue the *Columbia Journalism Review* reaches two milestones: Volume X, No. 1, the start of our tenth anniversary year; and stepup from quarterly to bimonthly publication. As stated in the Winter 1970-71 issue announcing the change, "Just as journalism must be timely, the editors have long felt that analysis and criticism of it must be timely." By publishing six issues a year instead of four we hope to provide a new dimension of timeliness and depth. We also expect to add new features, such as the sampler from local journalism reviews carried in this issue [page 29].

We are pleased to announce three other developments. One is recording of all back issues on microfilm, which should be available soon. (Inquiries should be addressed to University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106.) Second, a cumulative index. Third, an anthology of *CJR* articles to be published by Little, Brown and Company. Details about these undertakings will be announced as available.

The pilot issue of *CJR* was published on Oct. 2, 1961. It was, in the words of Edward W. Barrett, then dean of the Graduate School of Journalism, born of the conviction that "American journalism, which regularly criticizes all facets of society, was itself ready to profit from fair but forthright critiques" and that "a national graduate school of journalism has a duty not only to educate young professionals but also to help spur improvement in the profession." As *CJR* enters its tenth anniversary year, with a paid circulation of some 12,000, everyone associated with the magazine adheres even more strongly to these convictions.

The *Review* is grateful to its growing body of readers for their support through its first decade. We hope to serve them even better in its second.

Refresher

The report of the special committee on mass media of the Canadian Senate [see excerpts, page 21] is a reminder not only of close U.S. ties with the Canadian media system but of our poverty in lack of a comparable document. Various commissions and Congressional hearings have extracted globs of information about American media, but nowhere do we have so deft, authoritative, and comprehensive a statement of media problems—or of proposals for dealing with them.

The *Review* commends the report to the widest possible audience and urges consideration of its proposals—particularly the following: a Press Ownership Review Board to represent the public in media merger proposals; a Publications Development Loan Fund to assist new enterprises and foster competition; printing of the names of a publication's real owners at the top of its editorial page; a national press council and community press councils; and increased public dialogue with media owners and editors.

A tradition revived

There was something winningly old-fashioned about the Feb. 23 CBS documentary *The Selling of the Pentagon*. The subject of Defense Department public relations was neither new nor fashionable. Senator J. William Fulbright had written a book on the general topic, and the *Wall Street Journal* had run a front-page article covering much the same ground as recently as November. But CBS—specifically, writer-producer Peter Davis, backed by CBS News president Richard S. Salant—went about its business with a crispness and unsparing bluntness that have become all too rare in this age of the declining documentary.

An inverse measure of the program's effectiveness could be glimpsed in the nature of the response. The chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, the Vice President of the United States in charge of mass media, such as Pentagon-

oriented publications as *Air Force* and *Stars and Stripes*, and even *Barron's* [below] responded with



vehemence. But all neglected to address themselves to the major question raised by the program: Does the Defense Department engage in propagandizing the American public?

CBS unfortunately left itself open to such diversionary tactics. By using the rearrangement of time sequence and the deletion of contrary detail that are the stock in trade of much film editing, it enabled its critics to charge unfairness. The alarming subpoena issued on April 8 by the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee to obtain all of CBS's file materials on the documentary, including unused film, appeared to be pursuing the same scent.

Indeed, much of the Washington establishment in both parties appeared to be bent on neutralizing *The Selling of the Pentagon* by talking about everything but its major subject. CBS deserves congratulations for laying this topic squarely before the public and for its stiff response to retaliatory efforts.

Another Pentagon tale

Many hands helped bring to light the surveillance of thousands of civilians by military intelligence. More than a year ago the *Washington Monthly*, a young magazine of public affairs, carried an article on the subject by a former intelligence officer. In spring of 1970 Morton Kondracke of the Chicago *Sun-Times* pursued leads suggested by that article and put more facts on the record. Last December, Sander Vanocur of NBC's *First Tuesday* brought a parade of former agents before the cameras. Jared D. Stout of Newhouse National News Service, who had been working on the story for months, broke the most sensational aspect—

revelations by a former intelligence agent that the Army snooped on Illinois political figures, including at least two candidates for Congress. This concentration of effort helped bring about a full Congressional investigation and, we like to think, helped push 1984 a little further away.

Ending an acceptable myth

In painstaking detail Edward Jay Epstein, the writer who exposed the interior compromises of the Warren Commission, has probed the widely publicized claim that police killed twenty-eight members of the Black Panther party. His work, which appeared in the *New Yorker* of Feb. 13, provides a therapeutic corrective for all journalists who not only used the dubious statistic (concocted by the party's lawyer) but elevated it into acceptability by eliminating the attribution. On its own ground, Epstein's presentation is exemplary—the kind of service needed on many more stories.

Yet Epstein's ground is exceedingly narrow; indeed, his approach is almost mechanical. He gives little attention to the emotional context in which charges of a police campaign against the Panthers gained credibility (for example, the FBI's condemnation of the party as the most dangerous group in America). Nor does he give credit to the news organizations—notably, the *New York Times*—that pursued the matter after at first reporting the unsubstantiated figure. This is done, and very well, by Robert L. Bartley in the *Wall Street Journal* of March 17. Bartley states the underlying problem that Epstein scarcely touched:

As commendable as the press' recent reassessment of the twenty-eight-death episode is, it would be more comforting if it better measured the true depth of the problem. Surely it's worth pondering why the story that makes a splash today is for practical purposes the same one that was ignored fifteen months ago.

(Bartley refers here to a story by Earl Caldwell in the *Times* of Dec. 21, 1969.)

Bartley attributes the broad acceptance of Epstein's story—and the widespread confessions of editorial guilt that followed—to a change in the

national mood. That is accurate to an extent. But Epstein's story, it must be recognized, is also inadvertently political. By omitting the comprehensive background that might explain why so many citizens were disposed to believe the tale, Epstein leaves the implication that the press was being indolent or, indeed, malicious. The political importance of the story can be seen in the fact that the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism has now received two nudges from the White House urging that the *Review* give special attention to Epstein's article, which a Presidential staff member credits with "destroying one of the pervasive and pernicious myths about this Administration."

Certainly Epstein did not set out to provide aid and comfort for the White House nor, it is safe to say, did the editors of the *New Yorker*. That they published the article attests to their honesty. Nonetheless the presentation, by emphasizing technicalities over context, does too little to explain journalism's lapse or to offer future guidance.

Taking the trouble

Neil Sheehan, a reporter on assignment for the *New York Times* Book Review, performed a service much like Epstein's in—of all places—a review of a new book. Sheehan spent a month checking details of Mark Lane's *Conversations With Americans* and was forced to the conclusion that fact and apparent fabrication were often inseparable in the book. The country might have been spared considerable confusion if similar zeal had been invested in reviews of the stack of books that followed the Warren Commission report.

Big deal

The Joe Frazier-Muhammad Ali fight, which sucked perhaps \$30 million out of the citizenry, was at once a triumph of publicity and of news restriction. Operating on the premise that nobody should get anything free from the match, the promoters not only limited the blow-by-blow coverage

to closed-circuit TV but tried to keep the wire services from sending round-by-round bulletins for broadcast. (The Associated Press even received a legal threat at ringside.) Quite properly, both AP and United Press International refused to accept formal self-censorship, though both had to operate under severe restrictions. However, as Roger Tatarian of the UPI pointed out in the March 18 *UPI Reporter*:

While the promoters did not succeed, they did come away with a court ruling that literally invites them to block all interim reporting from ringside if they feel it essential to safeguard their commercial rights as promoters. . . . The court said the promoters "had and still have available to them the means to prevent the complained-of use—by barring wire services either from the arena or from transmitting during the fight." It is this observation that clouds the future of interim reporting. . . . [We] are on notice as to where things will begin when we start discussing the ground rules for the next closed-circuit bonanza.

Media on media

The *Review* has commented before on the curious inability of news media to report consistently on happenings elsewhere in the media. The recent upheaval at *Harper's* magazine, in which the editor, Willie Morris, and a number of his colleagues resigned, provides a case in point. In such dramas, of which we have seen numerous stagings in the past two decades, the aggrieved editors inevitably have a tactical advantage. Not only do they create the major news events with their actions but they can often gain the sympathy of their confrères who are covering the story. Satisfying as the resulting accounts may be in human terms, they do not necessarily represent balanced coverage.

In the *Harper's* dispute, the news initiative remained firmly in the hands of the dissidents. The two major stories in the *New York Times* after the initial resignation were headed: 6 HARPER EDITORS PLAN SHOWDOWN [March 9] and 6 HARPER EDITORS RESIGN AFTER TALK WITH COWLES [March 11]. *Newsweek* [March 15], and to a lesser extent, *Time*, enthusiastically accepted at face value the

resigning editors' own estimate of their work; Morris, *Newsweek* said, had turned a "literary magazine that had grown stodgy, predictable, and tediously middle-brow" into "a lively, controversial, and important journal once again."

Only secondarily and grudgingly, it seemed, did the coverage turn to the more basic situation at *Harper's*. If one read between the lines, one could find that *Harper's* had not been operating in the genteel poverty that is the assigned lot of serious magazines in the United States. Its editorial budget had virtually doubled under Morris, who had evidently set out to rid *Harper's* of any besetting sins of terseness by running longer and costlier articles. The money had to come from the controlling Cowles family corporation (Minneapolis branch), which had absorbed *Harper's* in the late 1960s, and from the Cowles's designated lieutenant, William S. Blair. But there had been no comparable rise in the sources of solvency—that is, profitable circulation and advertising revenue. The owners were bringing the era of high living to an end; in this circumstance, conflict was inevitable.

But those who wanted a full account of these issues could find them only sketchily in the news media; instead, the most complete story appeared later in another serious magazine, *Saturday Review* [April 10], under the byline of Stuart Little.

The byline putdown

In the Baltimore *Evening Sun* of Jan. 14, the following byline appeared on a story about Maryland nursing homes.

By Sandra G. Parshall

Putting an aged relative into a Maryland nursing home isn't as simple as finding a home you like that has an empty bed. It is tense and most expensive. It is designed primarily for patients who are convalescing from acute illness. Public assistance is kind of

Behind its appearance lay a court ruling, and behind the ruling lay an unsatisfactory resolution of a dispute over a reporter's rights in his own name.

After a number of patients had died in nursing homes Sandra G. Parshall and two other *Sun* re-

porters were assigned last fall to investigate, with orders to name homes where conditions were unsatisfactory. In the completed series Mrs. Parshall did so, only to have the names deleted, evidently on legal advice. She demanded removal of her byline on grounds, as later stated in court, that the editing would "raise the inevitable inference that the basis of her articles was so insubstantial that she was afraid to name the institutions involved." The paper refused her request, as well as that of the Newspaper Guild local, which believed (wrongly) that it previously had reached a firm oral understanding on the issue.

When Mrs. Parshall went to court a judge ruled: "Mrs. Parshall is an employee, a reporter. . . . She must therefore fulfill her assignment, submit her material, and let the material be edited just the same as has been the practice at the *Sun* papers for all other newspaper reporters." Submission of the material for editing was not the issue, of course; the use of Mrs. Parshall's name was. The *Sun* immediately attached her byline to the series.

There must be severe doubt about the good judgment of a management willing to go to such lengths to coerce a journalist who, to all appearances, was merely protecting her good name and exercising her conscience. Among other things, the management gave the Guild good reason to seek written, unqualified "news integrity" provisions in the next contract. In its court argument the newspaper used the curious reasoning that the byline helped "reinforce a reporter's responsibility for his work." Can it be said that Mrs. Parshall was being penalized for anything but taking this policy too seriously?

Uneven match

A little weekly in Traverse City, Mich., called the *Weekender*, recently investigated the death of a patient at the Traverse City State Hospital. The hospital administration did not care for the resultant series and set out to kill the paper. Administrators called a supplier who advertised in the paper and told him to cancel. A local bank was warned that

if it continued to advertise, hospital accounts would be withdrawn. The local Sears Roebuck store was put under pressure to cancel. The hospital drew up a blacklist of uncooperative businesses. Ultimately the state government came to the rescue—a report by the attorney general condemned the hospital administration for making “the State a party to an attempt to stifle freedom of the press.”

The extraordinary thing about this tale is not that it happened, for similar things happen to other papers regularly under other circumstances. The unusual point is that the involvement of a state official brought it into the open. Too often weeklies simply have to suffer the consequences of boycotts.

Darts and laurels

Darts: To *Reader's Digest* and *Newsday*, for turning what were ostensibly supplements devoted to environmental issues into mere advertising gambits. *Newsday's* ad-stuffed section ran Jan. 26. The *Digest* project, scheduled for next September, is the more offensive, for it will permit corporations to present paid advertising material in the *Digest's* editorial format.

Laurel: To the *Chicago Tribune*, for a series in cooperation with the Chicago Better Government Association exposing bribery and other abuses in the city's private ambulance services. The effort resulted in indictment of sixteen persons, including ten Chicago policemen.

Dart: To state and local law enforcement agencies which still allow employees to masquerade as newsmen on assignment. For recent examples of this pernicious practice see *Chicago Journalism Review* [January] and the *New York Times* [March 29].

Laurel: To the *Washington Post* Company, for its plan to transfer its FM radio station to Howard University, thus giving Washington a badly needed black-controlled facility.

Dart: To ABC-TV for letting a joke go too far. The informality and good humor of ABC-TV stations' local *Eyewitness News* format, originated at Channel 7 in New York, were refreshing, and sometimes still are—but too often the programs degenerate into news with a smirk.

Laurel: To two nonestablishment news outlets in New York City, the weekly *Village Voice* and Pacifica radio station WBAI-FM, for concentrated coverage of prison conditions in the city and state. They are carrying on one of the oldest and most enlightened traditions of American reform.

Dart: To the *New York Times* Book Review, for its fussy insertion of two paragraphs of explanatory matter (reportedly emanating from the legal department) contradicting what a reviewer had to say about the paper's response to a Red hunt of the 1950s.

Laurel: To Richard Oliver of the *New York Daily News*, for pursuing the case of a marine who had been unjustly convicted of rape on Okinawa. After more than fifty articles and editorials, a new court-martial reversed the conviction.

Domestic hors d'oeuvres

—Salt Lake City *Deseret News*,
Dec. 22, 1970.



Salami and cheddar cheese are among food products developed at USU.

TOM WICKER

The greening of the press

Are the news media too oriented toward 'official sources'? What kind of journalism is required in an Age of Transformation?

■ For more than a year Spiro T. Agnew has been traveling around the country making assertions about the news media, all of which in my judgment warrant considerable reflection by those who work in the field, and some of which have received that kind of reflection. I would sum up the reaction to this criticism in three categories. First, there have been rather nervous assertions of the virtue and professional integrity of the press, without much conviction. Then there have been strong restatements of First Amendment privileges and rights, without any real investigation into what the press has been doing to sustain the First Amendment. And finally, in a number of cases there have been strongly renewed efforts by editors and publishers to achieve a new sense of objectivity—which in effect means that they agree with the Vice President, because the basis of his criticism is that the news media have not been objective enough.

It seems to me that these reactions—particularly the last reaction—are exactly wrong, because the Vice President was making exactly the wrong criticism. Actually, what he has been expressing is a rather Marxist view of the news media, a view that

the media really should serve the interests of the State. That is the element of the Agnew criticism that in too many cases we have failed to recognize.

If I had been in Mr. Agnew's place and been trying to make an intelligent, useful criticism of the American press, I think I would have said that its biggest weakness is its reliance on and its acceptance of official sources—indeed, its "objectivity" in presenting the news. That is, that the fundamental reliance of the American news media in my experience has been, with rare and honorable exceptions, on the statement by the official source, be it government or business or academic or whatever. And much of what we mean by objectivity in American journalism concerns whether due credit is given to the official statement, the official explanation, the background explanation from the official source. This is certainly the Agnew measurement of objectivity and in most cases it has been the press's own measurement of objectivity.

Now why should this have been? I think, first, it is because of the pronounced lack of an intellectual tradition in the American press. I would be the last to assert that we don't have a muckraking tradition, that we don't have a rather notable record of catching the scoundrel with his hand in the till, or finding the official misdeed, the conflict of interest, and the like. We do have that. I refer to the lack of an intellectual tradition which will

Tom Wicker is an associate editor of the *New York Times*. His article is based on a recent speech at Columbia.

challenge official wisdom, challenge official statements, challenge institutional processes. We have never had that kind of an intellectual tradition in the American press and this has been a weakness.

Secondly, I think that we have had, historically, an orientation toward nationalism in politics and toward establishmentarianism in other areas of society, such as the economy or the academic world. Particularly in politics and diplomacy the orientation toward nationalism has been very pronounced in recent years. The obvious example, I think, is the failure of the American press, exemplified by the Washington bureau of the *New York Times*, of which I was in charge at the time, adequately to question the assumptions, the intelligence, the whole idea of America in the world—indeed the whole idea of the world—which led this country into the Vietnam War in the 1960s. It is commonplace now, when the horse has already been stolen, to examine those assumptions. But where were we at the time we might have brought an enlightened public view to bear on that question? We were not, I think, very forward in challenging the rationale for that unhappy episode in American history.

Orientation toward nationalism on the one hand and toward establishmentarianism on the other also caused the American press almost to a man (again including me and again an unhappy lesson learned) in late 1967 to dismiss as at best a joke, and possibly even some form of conspiracy, the emergence of Senator Eugene McCarthy as a Presidential candidate. We can see in retrospect that that was a historical moment of great importance. But operating out of our orientation toward the conventional wisdom, in that case the conventional view of politics—what we could learn by going and asking the national chairman and the state chairman what we were supposed to think—we were told that the candidacy was a joke at best. Again this orientation toward the established view, the official source, led us astray.

It has carried all the way to the sports pages. As late as the time when the Jets, the football team from New York City in the American Football League, were getting ready to demolish the champion of the other league, every sports writer that I know of was writing that the American Football League was a "Mickey Mouse" league, a joke. Why

were they doing that? They were doing that because, instead of using their own brains, they were told that by the official sources. Even reporters who had been out and seen those teams play should have known better. This is the sort of thing that is constantly happening in the American press.

Why were so many people, citizens as well as reporters, surprised last fall when it turned out that law-and-order in the demagogic sense was not the all-consuming, embracing political issue we had been told it was? We were surprised precisely because we had been told it was such an issue. We hadn't really looked into it. (Obviously, at this point I should say that you can't propound generalities such as these without making honorable exceptions. There certainly were honorable exceptions. I am referring to the general direction the American press has taken over the years.)

Why, as another example, has it been left mostly to people outside the press to raise the great issue of consumerism in America? Until Ralph Nader came along and began making challenges, until he began organizing teams to see whether the Federal Trade Commission was a moribund agency or was actually doing something, little of this was done. I am one of a long line of reporters hired in the *New York Times* Washington bureau to look into and cover the regulatory agencies. I can name at least eight reporters who have been in our bureau who were hired precisely to do that, and the only one who has ever done it is the man who is there now, Christopher Lydon. In every other case, when the reporter would come into the bureau, instead of really being turned loose to do this kind of job he always was given something of a more institutional nature to do. On my arrival, before I ever set foot in the FTC I found that we needed one more man to cover Congress, and there I was covering Congress as many reporters before me had done.

If you think about objectivity in the American press—that is, the question of giving both sides of a picture, of trying to come to a rational balance of the facts in a case, trying to weigh pros and cons and see what is most important—you can see that the tradition of objectivity is bound to give a special kind of weight to the official source, the one who speaks from a powerful institutional po-

sition. If the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, for instance, tells you something about Democratic Party politics, the code of objectivity is bound to add a special weight to that, as against what you might be told by some relatively obscure professor of political science or some relatively obscure reporter in Omaha who says, "Well, that just doesn't seem to add up to what I think I hear, see, what I talk about." We tend to give weight to the official source, as if we believe that the man wouldn't be there if he didn't know what he was talking about; the institution wouldn't be functioning if it didn't have a certain relevance to whatever area it is functioning in.

Why, when the war in Vietnam first really became an American war with air attacks in February of 1965, was that accepted so universally and so uncritically as having been really the only thing

"Institutions tend to be self-serving news sources . . ."

that President Johnson could do? At that time there was a small American unit with airplanes stationed at Pleiku. But Americans, at least theoretically, were not in combat in Vietnam. They were there as advisers and helpers. The guard, the perimeter around the camp, was South Vietnamese. Then the perimeter was pierced by guerrillas and by mortar attacks from outside, a number of Americans were killed, and a number of American airplanes were destroyed. President Johnson, in retaliation, launched air attacks on the North.

Officials said it was the only thing he could do. But *Times* correspondent Charles Mohr, who had been in Vietnam for *Time* and then became our premier correspondent there, wrote what we call a "Q-Header," a news analysis which was conventional enough except that it raised one very interesting point in a fairly low paragraph. That paragraph said that it was difficult to see how air

attacks on the North could deal with the situation that had been shown to exist at Pleiku, which was that South Vietnamese guards couldn't cope with the guerrillas. That was the essence: the South Vietnamese guards couldn't cope with the guerrillas. Yet no one in the daily press seized on that fact to say, "What are we doing, then, flying air attacks against the North?"

There are a number of reasons for that. I think the first is the orientation toward the official explanation, the feeling that the President said it so obviously it must be the case. Another, almost equally important reason was that there really wasn't an official spokesman on the other side. In the Senate there were only two outspoken critics of our whole involvement in Vietnam. One was Senator Morse of Oregon; the other, Senator Gruening of Alaska. Senator Fulbright told me, "You know, I'd like to be out there speaking with Morse and Gruening, except I can't allow myself to get associated with those fellows in that kind of Quixotic campaign against what the Administration is doing." So we had no official spokesman on the other side.

There was another example last October when Mr. Nixon came back from his European trip and plunged into the election campaign. Why did he campaign? There are statements in the *Times* and other papers that he was plunging in because "Republican prospects are so good" and he's "going to go in there and clinch the election victory" and he "really wants to be part of it" and "we're going to push it across the top" and "prospects are good everywhere, particularly for taking over the Senate." So election day came. Things didn't go so well. Official and background statements then came out declaring that the President had gone into the campaign in October because Republican prospects had been very bad and he had to get in and save the Republicans from a damaging defeat. Indeed, we were told, that is what he managed to do. Where they might have lost fifteen seats in the House they only lost nine; where they would have lost a number of seats in the Senate they only lost two; and so forth. Both versions can't be true.

Since the election there has been a good deal of questioning on pragmatic grounds of the Nixon Administration's current rationale, but I don't

think there has been a pronounced effort to go back and pin the President to the wall with the statements of October as against the statements of November; not just to say, "Mr. Nixon, you are a bad fellow, you misled us," but to say to ourselves, "What's going on here? What's happening when the President can say one thing in October and another thing in November and get equal coverage for both?" Instead of doing that we print today's official statement and then tomorrow's and then the next day's and then the next day's. And it often comes out a jumbled mess.

In science coverage, a first-class reporter like Walter Sullivan of the *New York Times* is allowed a good deal of leeway to use his own knowledge, to come to conclusions of his own, to say what he thinks is important and not important in that field. That is also true in the arts. When Clive Barnes was appointed drama critic of the *New York Times* he was a dance critic; he was not long-experienced in drama criticism although, as he quickly demonstrated, he knew a good deal about that field. But the day he was appointed he was allowed infinitely greater leeway to use his intelligence and come to esthetic and intellectual judgments on drama questions than any political reporter in the United States would be in a news column—no matter if that political reporter had been deeply involved for twenty years in politics and was a man of the highest academic background, the greatest integrity, and the deepest intellectual penetration. The political reporter would not be allowed the kind of leeway that any critic of the arts is allowed.

So there are certain areas in which journalists are allowed considerable leeway. But by and large we rely very heavily on the official source, and this really is what we talk about when we come down to the question of objectivity.

If that continues far into the future what will it mean? I think it will mean disaster. In the first place—and I have learned this lesson bitterly—institutions always serve their own interests. To the extent that you are reliant upon institutional sources for news you are reliant upon a self-serving source which in every case will attempt to put the best face on the news, to interpret information for you in the light of its own interests. That is ob-

viously not something to be criticized; only the degree to which an institution would distort the news to serve its own interests is really to be criticized. You always attempt to put the best face on your behavior. It is only when you tell an outright, flat, provable, damaging lie that you really transgress moral bounds. So this is a truism—a fact of life—that reporters have to understand if they are relying upon institutions: they are relying upon a self-serving interest.

Secondly, institutions today, more than at any time in my lifetime, are under challenge precisely because they are irrelevant in many ways and are "out of touch." Life has changed, taken the ground out from under them. We see this in the universities, in the churches, in political institutions. These institutions have stood still while the world has moved out from under them. Therefore you are going not only to a self-serving source for news but to a source that simply may not know what it's talking about. Anybody who has been roaming the country as a reporter in the last few years can cite examples of having gone to a perfectly respectable institution, to a highly official source, and taken a statement that seems to have absolute surface validity, only to find that as events unfolded it meant nothing because it was out of touch with reality.

Another point, related to the second one, is that there are forces and currents at work in the world which are not institutional yet are profoundly important—which affect the way every person in the world lives, the way we will live, the way our children will live, the way we will organize ourselves. I question, for instance, whether three currents that are easily visible in this country are institutional in nature: the attempt among young people to find new ways of living; the dissatisfaction among black people; and the dissatisfaction of women. As is always the case, institutions are scrambling to get in touch and to take advantage of these movements. But if you restrict yourself to institutional sources you are going to miss a great deal of what is most important.

This can be seen in the debate in Washington over the protectionist trade measure known as the "Mills Bill." You may find the background in economic journals and in smaller magazines, but very

little will be printed in the daily press about the fact that over a long period we have shifted from an industrial economy to a post-industrial economy. Production of services now is more important than the production of goods. By 1980 production of services will totally dominate our economy. You can export services through the international corporation, which is a proposition quite apart from trade restrictions; you can export services through foreign aid, which is government policy; but that is about the limit of it. What you export, by and large, are goods.

Now, if the American economy, out of a whole complex of forces that have nothing to do with institutional action, is shifting from production of goods to production of services, then at some

"'Let a hundred flowers bloom' is the only answer . . ."

point—perhaps already—exports become far less important than in the past. And if exports are less important then the question of foreign countries' retaliating against our exports is less important. It is this kind of movement that I think is a great force behind the trade bill. But it is this kind of thing on which we have too little reporting. If a reporter goes to cover the Mills Bill and all he knows is what Wilbur Mills or some trade association or a White House official tells him, then how can he help his readers understand what really is in the national interest?

The same thing is true on military policy. It is an article of faith among liberals that we are being taken over by the military, that military influences are running the Government. But that was really happening back in the Fifties when none of us realized it and nobody wrote anything about it. Today the trend is more nearly the other way, down, by almost any measure—by per cent of Gross National Product, by absolute expenditures, by numbers of men in the military, by commit-

ments abroad, by civilian opposition. By almost any measurement, militarism is on the defensive in America.

We not only missed the trend, and we're not only missing the trend nowadays, but we missed the turnaround point, in the sense of its being a turnaround point. The reason? We come back inevitably to reliance on official sources instead of reliance on our own brains, our own intelligence, our own ability to go out and find out and write about what is happening in the world.

The nature of the world we are coming into, I think, is clear. We are entering an age not of reform, because reform is when institutions themselves take the lead and change themselves and adapt to new conditions; and not an age of revolution because that is when revolutionaries replace one institution with another—usually worse than the one we had to begin with. Instead, we are entering an age of transformation. It is rather like the process that takes place within our own bodies; after so many years our bodies are totally changed, even though we don't realize it. The famous murderer Nathan Leopold, when trying to get a job in order to qualify for release from prison, made the point that there was not a single cell remaining in his body of the young man who killed a child in Chicago in the 1920s—that all the cells in his body were different. We change—from childhood into middle age to old age—and the process of regeneration continues with others who follow. I think it is this kind of age that we are coming into.

And it is proceeding at express-train speed. That is the thing we must grasp. It is happening in ways that aren't seen, aren't understood, aren't described to us, because it is not institutional. Institutionally, in Congress reform of the Electoral College has been blocked. But in fact for many years now our electoral processes have been changed in ways we still don't fully grasp, by television. Last year we thought that political spot commercials were going to have a tremendous impact, and they didn't. What does? We don't fully know. We just know that our electoral process is being changed, even though institutional reform of it has everywhere failed.

Another example: almost everywhere that state constitutional reforms go on the ballot they are

ultimately defeated. Nonetheless state governments are being changed. Local governments are being changed. They are being changed by processes that we don't understand, by demands that people are making upon them that they didn't make before or by the absence of demands that once were made, by the rise and fall of sources of income, of problems, and so forth. What an impact on local and state government the automobile made! That was fifty years ago or more. It is that kind of thing, more than institutional acts, that describes the age.

In the mid-Fifties, particularly in the South, we thought that the Supreme Court decisions and the rise of the civil rights movement were going to be of enormous historical consequence. So indeed they were, but piling into insignificance by the historical consequences of something that many of us didn't even know was going on, which certainly had no institutional base—the enormous migration, one of the great migrations of history, of the black people out of the rural areas of the South into the cities. That was a historical movement of consequences that we yet can hardly begin to see, at a time when most authorities think the civil rights movement is, if not dead, at least merged into this other process of greater importance.

And isn't it true that the dehumanization of life by advancing technology, which we can all identify, is producing in our young people the profoundest demands for return to human principles and to human ways of living? The input is producing, in many ways, the opposite result.

How can the news media cope with this age of transformation? Certainly not by institutional coverage—by increasing the number of reporters in the Washington bureau of the *New York Times* and spreading them more widely over governmental institutions, most of which, if not moribund, are at least by now centripetal in the sense that they serve mainly themselves. Nor can we cope with the age of transformation by formula writing and editing, by saying there are certain and only ways that you can communicate with people. The age can't be coped with by "brainstorming"—by selection of brilliant editors who confer with themselves twice a day and decide what ought to be in the newspaper and who ought to write it and where it can best be fitted. Nor can it be cov-

ered by the retarded child of brainstorming, group journalism—flooding an area with fifty reporters—or by the sort of comprehensive futility which has been the reliance of the *New York Times* so often in the past: the vacuum cleaner concept that everything that happens must be reported.

A lot of people say, "You know, Adolph Ochs was the great publisher of alltime," which no doubt is true in the United States. "And his concept was comprehensiveness and objectivity." That was his concept for his time, but I believe his concept basically was to have a newspaper that served his time. And the newspaper that served his time is quite different from the newspaper that will serve our time.

I have no institutional formula for such a newspaper. Indeed, the essence of what I am saying is that there cannot be an institutional or a professional formula that will cope with it. "Let a hundred flowers bloom" is the only recommendation anyone can make. But there are at least two underlying things that we must do to serve the purpose. First, we must get the best people to work as journalists. We must seek out those with the highest intellectual standards, with the highest purpose, and above all the best writers we can get—good writers in the broadest literary sense, who have sensitivity to what happens around them, who understand how the specific can be translated into the general, who in the best sense are the novelists of their time. The novel, the good novel, has always been the best journalism.

The other thing we must do is, having got all those good writers, we must create the kind of conditions in which they can do their best work. We can't do that by imposing formula writing, by imposing group journalism. We are talking about artists. This is the only way that we can cope with an age of transformation, to really begin to serve our great purpose in life.

Just as dehumanizing produces—and will produce—ever growing demands for a humane life and for humane dealings with one another, it seems to me that as we are more and more bombarded with visual and auditory images, there will be an irresistible demand for the word and for the meaning the word can convey. For the long future of journalism, that is our challenge.

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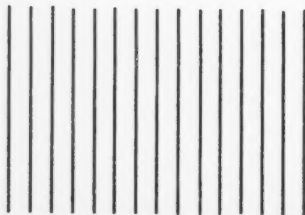
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The implications of a 'wired nation' are enormous. Yet basic decisions about its structure are being made in an information vacuum.

Cable TV: the endangered revolution

STUART P. SUCHERMAN

■ For eight days in March a series of hearings as potentially important as any in the history of communications were held by the Federal Communications Commission in Washington—in “splendid isolation.” The hearings, concerning the future of cable television, were not only virtually ignored by the public but by the group which will be most affected by their outcome, the news media.

This is not unusual for cable TV. Almost from its accidental birth some twenty years ago, when a TV salesman and repairman in Lansford, Pa., installed an antenna on a mountain and sent signals to a group of subscribers by coaxial cable, its movement into the mainstream of American consciousness has been tortuous. During the week the New York City Board of Estimate was holding public hearings on awarding franchises in Manhattan, for example, the *New York Times* reported the event on its inside back (TV news) page until the franchises were awarded. About the same time it devoted page 1 space to such stories as the ejection of a Women's Lib member from the traditionally all-male McSorley's Ale House. The

New York franchise not only determined the electronic communications future of Manhattan but also will have a major impact throughout the United States. CBS-TV, at this writing the only commercial network even to explore the cable TV story in nationwide prime time, limited itself to a twenty-minute segment last year on *60 Minutes*.

To cover and explain cable TV in a twenty-minute film segment or a three-paragraph back-of-the-paper story is an impossibility. Maybe that is why coverage has been so slim. Cable TV admittedly is one of the most complex and difficult subjects—but its technological and economic implications are so vast that it could change the way Americans live.

TV's basic limitation—channel scarcity—is directly rooted in the characteristics of over-the-air broadcasting. TV sets have twelve VHF channels, but interference greatly reduces the number that can operate in a given area. The UHF frequency, of course, offers many more channels, but tuning difficulties and the nature of the UHF signal have mitigated against its becoming a solution to channel scarcity. Transmitting signals by cable completely reverses the situation from channel scarcity to channel abundance. Because one is expanding the frequency spectrum in the cable, a community,

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instead of having only some half-dozen channels available for TV transmission, can have twenty, forty, or even more. From a system that dictates programming on a national or at best regional level, broadcasting can be transformed into a medium by which even the smallest community can effectively communicate with itself. In an increasingly impersonal society where governmental, economic, and social structures are so large, the ability to reverse the process of bigness, to redirect energies to local problems, and to establish local communications can have enormous value.

But this aspect of cable is only the beginning of the potential of a true "wired nation." By installing a strip of copper wire within an insulating sheath only slightly larger in diameter than a lipstick tube, one can bring to every home two-way, broad-band communications that can provide a whole galaxy of new services. These could encompass facsimile reproduction of documents, including possibly newspapers, magazines, and specialized information service; computer links and data transmission affording access to information banks at libraries, medical centers, etc.; home fire and crime protection systems; and delivery of medical welfare and other social services presently dependent on outmoded institutional methods. As FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson once stated, "coaxial cable is to a telephone wire what Niagara Falls is to a garden hose."

Obviously, the implications of such a system and the issue of who controls it are watershed questions, comparable in importance to development of the railroad, the telephone, the airplane, and cable's stepfather, over-the-air broadcasting. Yet the industry has been evolving under a curious stop-and-go pattern, alternating between overregulation and at times no regulation.

When cable began it was only for communities beyond over-the-air broadcasting range or so afflicted by interference from local terrain that it was impossible to receive an adequate picture. At that point neither broadcasters nor the FCC objected to cable; in fact, it was welcomed by the industry because it increased audience size, which attracted more advertising dollars. National regulation was not seriously discussed until 1958, when the number of cable subscribers had grown and—

more importantly—the practice of importing signals from outside the normal over-the-air viewing area began to worry station owners.

Over-the-air broadcasters quickly realized the danger in allowing distant signals to "fractionalize" their audiences—take viewers away from programs they normally would watch—thereby causing a drop in advertising revenue. And cable operators correctly foresaw that this issue would determine their future. Though poor reception affects only a small proportion of people, the ability to offer programs not normally available could attract vast audiences in major markets—and distant signal importation is the cheapest and easiest method of offering this service.

The low cost and the ease of acquisition of programs raised still another controversy, basically unresolved for twelve years. That is the issue of copyright. Broadcasters argued that cable competed unfairly with their industry because it did not have to pay for the material with which it attracted audiences, while the broadcasters paid huge sums to copyright holders of program material. The copyright owners quickly agreed, and the industry was off on a roller coaster that wound through both the FCC and the halls of Congress. The Supreme Court gave the riders a push when, in the *Fortnightly* case of 1968, it held that mere retransmission of signals was not a performance and therefore not in violation of the 1908 Copyright Act. Since *Fortnightly* dealt with a system which did nothing but pick up signals with an antenna, no one is quite sure what would have happened had the situation dealt with retransmitting the signals by microwave. The issue since has fallen to a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee headed by Senator John McClellan.

The FCC at first maintained a hands-off attitude toward cable ostensibly on grounds of nonjurisdiction—cable did not broadcast shows over the air and thus had no impact on broadcasting. Through the early 1960s, the Commission, under intense pressure from both broadcasters and Congress, nibbled at the jurisdictional issue, then in 1965 swallowed it whole by ruling that it had authority to regulate cable systems. The Commission then required cable systems in a given community to carry all local TV signals and prohibited show-

ing imported programs which duplicated local programs on the same day.

In 1966, under a continuing rationale of protecting local UHF broadcasters, the Commission ruled that in the top 100 markets (the 100th TV market is Akron, O.), any TV station or potential builder of a UHF station could prevent a cable system from importing signals by objecting to the FCC, which would sustain the objection unless the cable operator could satisfy Commissioners that importation would not hurt that area's broadcast service. Two years later the Commission went even further. Admitting that former rules involving lengthy hearing were cumbersome, it proposed new rules which in effect prohibited distant signal importation into the top 100 markets.

Meanwhile, cable continued to grow—reaching 1.7 million U.S. households, or 3.3 per cent of the

tude toward distant signals and sought a compromise that allowed for the growth of cable while protecting the local broadcaster.

The primary force behind this shift was President Nixon's 1969 appointment of Dean Burch as FCC chairman. While Burch brought a refreshing new attitude toward the problem, the Commission's proposal seemed more akin to a Rube Goldberg nightmare than an effective, clean-cut regulatory approach. Its basic concept was to allow any cable system to import four distant signals into any community. Incoming commercials were to be replaced by others sold by local broadcasters, thus avoiding anticipated harm to local stations by distant signals. The net effect was that the Commission for the first time was faced with a unified constituency—almost everyone was against it.

Cable operators, for the first time dealing with a chairman and a proposal somewhat in their interest, did not attack the measure but politely suggested it was not exactly workable. Just recently the National Cable Television Association modified its position by proposing that importation of the four distant signals not be interfered with except where a broadcast station can show a threat to provision of minimal service in a given market. The National Association of Broadcasters, however, terms the proposal "repugnant to broadcasters and indeed to our entire system of competitive enterprise and private property." The Commission has called for prompt resolution of the issue.

The Commission also has attempted to clear up the bewildering relationship between federal and local authorities. Cable systems are built after award of local franchises by municipal authorities. The Commission, in assuming jurisdiction over cable in 1965, only passed a regulation affecting certain national aspects such as distant signal importation; local authorities continued to decide who got a franchise, what kind of system there should be, and what services should be provided. The Commission rejected the notion that it license all cable systems as being beyond its physical and financial capabilities. It suggested limiting itself to setting national standards, which a municipality would have to certify that it had considered in awarding franchises. In other areas the municipality would be compelled to outline in detail fran-

"The chance of widespread corruption . . ."

total, in 1965; 3.2 million households, or 6.4 per cent of the total, in 1969; and 4.5 million homes, or about 7 per cent of the U.S. TV audience, in 1971. Systems now number some 2,500, with estimated annual revenues of \$300 million. San Diego, Calif., largest single system, has more than 40,000 subscribers, and high-capacity cable operations are under construction in such places as Akron and Columbia, Md.

The FCC has continued to spar with the industry. In 1969 it required cable operators to originate programs on one channel and allowed them to sell advertising. In 1970, it prohibited cross-ownership of cable systems by broadcast stations in their own markets or by the three networks, and proposed further restrictions which would prohibit newspapers, radio stations, advertising agencies, and national magazines from owning and controlling cable. Most importantly, the Commission made a valiant attempt to rethink its past restrictive atti-

chise terms indicating compliance with specific guidelines. The Commission also proposed limiting franchise fees to 2 per cent of gross revenues.

This proposal not only hit the municipalities where they were vulnerable but pointed up a major problem in local franchising. The typical franchise is framed on the one hand by the corporate desire for a profitable enterprise and on the other by municipalities' almost total lack of information about cable. Cities desperately in need of revenue often are blinded by the promise of new and potentially large income from CATV. The prospective franchisee usually makes the approach to city fathers, with a proposal to construct a system. Where officials have never heard of cable, franchises of extremely long duration can be awarded with no requirements for extended local services, with minimal channel capacity, and with the municipality, in effect, mortgaging its communications development for at least a generation. Such results are not surprising when one hears stories of officials so confused that they ask cable companies to write the franchise agreements.

There are many pitfalls. Officials of a small New York town reported the story of a franchisee awarded a permit to build a system to which about 80 per cent of the citizenry subscribed. After four years of a thirty-year franchise had elapsed officials were appalled to find that inferior equipment had left about 50 per cent of the town without decent service. Confronted with these facts, the operator promised to improve service, but never did. When threatened with revocation of his franchise the operator merely shrugged his shoulders. If city officials revoke the franchise they calculate it will take two years to arrange another. In the interim half the town will be deprived of its now-adequate service. If they don't revoke the franchise, the other half of the population will continue to be angered about poor service. A performance bond, required at the time the franchise was awarded, might have prevented this dilemma.

Another scenario for trouble occurs when the city deliberates, awards a franchise, and construction either is not begun or is started and then halted. This generally indicates the presence of a speculator who merely intends to sell his franchise

later. This type of abuse could be stopped by writing a detailed construction schedule into the agreement, along with a performance bond.

On the other hand, some municipalities, in quest of money, have eschewed the 5 to 10 per cent shares of gross revenues that seem average and have extracted as much as 30 per cent. The Commission has sought to limit this practice, reasoning that excessively high franchising fees do little to help meet city payrolls, while inhibiting municipal and educational services that could be obtained.

In any situation where huge sums are involved and the stakes are high, the possibility of widespread corruption exists. Obviously, there are no figures to indicate how much money has passed under the table. But one can speculate that there has been some. In January Irving B. Kahn, president of Teleprompter Corporation, the largest cable operation in the United States, was indicted by a federal jury on charges of bribing the mayor and other officials of Johnstown, Pa.; Kahn admitted he paid the money, but claimed it was extortion. (In another example of curious coverage of this issue by the media, the *Times* reported the Kahn indictment on its back page, using wire service copy.) In March Kahn was indicted again, in New Jersey, and he subsequently resigned as Teleprompter chief, though remaining as a consultant.

Teleprompter is only one of many huge organizations interested in cable. One of the largest, Bell Telephone Company, has been following cable's implications with extreme care. Bell, though primarily geared toward providing phone service, also generates income from electronic services such as TWX teletype, data transmission, and even primitive forms of facsimile reproduction. Though the parent company and its affiliates and subsidiaries are prohibited from owning and operating cable systems in their service areas, the companies still can build systems and let others run them in what is called a "feedback" operation. Beyond that there is, by definition, an intimate relationship between the phone company, other utilities, and cable. In wiring a town a cable operator, for economic reasons, usually uses an existing utilities plant. This means renting space either on telephone poles or in large underground ducts used to carry telephone wires. This has put the telephone com-

pany in an intriguing bargaining position.

In some instances telephone companies simply have refused to grant pole-attachment rights, and there have been delays in negotiating prices, exorbitant charges for attachments, and delays in installation. While the Bell system has assured the FCC that it will provide pole attachments on a nondiscriminatory basis, at reasonable rates, and without delay, indications are that in some instances it provides only for TV service and that there still are delays in negotiating reasonable rates. It is safe to say that the telephone company is not eager to help a competitor for future services. It is also reasonable to assume that much time and effort are being spent by Bell to develop, in narrow band, the very services the cable industry is talking about.

For now, it is Teleprompter that is moving most openly. Last September final approval was given for merger of Teleprompter with another com-

"Citizen groups have begun to speak for the public . . ."

pany—H & B American Corporation. The merged company now owns about 100 systems serving some 400,000 subscribers in twenty-eight states. The real curiosity about the company is its relationship with Hughes Aircraft Corporation. Hughes owns outright about 6 per cent of Teleprompter stock. In addition, Hughes has 49 per cent of Teleprompter's Manhattan CATV Corporation and, with Teleprompter, 50 per cent of Los Angeles' cable company, called Theta Cable. It also appears that Teleprompter and Hughes have adopted a financing program to defray some construction costs of systems in Manhattan and Los Angeles.

Hughes and Teleprompter have also developed microwave facilities which can reduce the high per-mile costs of laying cable in sparsely settled areas; and Hughes has asked the FCC for permis-

sion to build and deploy a domestic satellite to provide not only telephone and data service but also channels to distribute programs to cable systems. It is also significant that H & B American, the firm that recently merged with Teleprompter, was owned by Jack Kent Cooke, who now holds about 17 per cent of the merged Teleprompter shares. Mr. Cooke owns the basketball Los Angeles Lakers, the hockey Los Angeles Kings, a share of the Washington Redskins, and he was the chief backer of the recent Ali-Frazier fight.

Three years ago Hughes bought Sports Network, which specializes in sports programming over independent stations. The inevitable result would seem to be some form of highly attractive sports programming that, through pay cable TV into millions of homes, could dwarf the recent Ali-Frazier fight in profit potential.

Teleprompter was also involved in one of the more interesting franchising stories, in New York City. In 1965, Teleprompter and Sterling Manhattan Cable Television (owned in part by Time, Inc.) were granted interim franchises to install and operate cable TV, Sterling in the lower and middle areas of Manhattan, Teleprompter in the upper sections. The interim franchises, for experimental purposes, covered two years. In June of 1967 Mayor John Lindsay appointed a task force, with Fred W. Friendly as chairman, to study the effect of the planned World Trade Center on TV signals and to review telecommunications in New York and make specific recommendations about cable. In 1968 the Mayor's Task Force recommended that cable TV franchises be granted on the basis of competitive bidding on percentage of gross revenue to accrue to the city; that franchises extend not more than ten years; that the city regulate all rates; and that companies be required to provide subscribers with eighteen channels—eleven to carry signals of the city's eleven TV stations, three for exclusive use of the city, and four for program origination (two of these to be leased only as common carriers). The task force also recommended establishment of a new municipal office for telecommunication.

When the Board of Estimate received recommendations from the Corporation Counsel and the Director of Franchises last June, the officials

"reluctantly" dismissed the notion of competitive bidding with the argument that \$30 million already had been invested by two companies and the city did not want to disrupt existing service. The contracts called for seventeen channels by 1971 and twenty-four channels within three years of the date of the contract. Instead of three channels for city use, there were two; instead of four for program origination as common carriers there was one, plus one for presently underdeveloped telecommunications service essentially on a common carrier basis. The franchises extended for twenty years, not ten, and allowed the companies to set their own rates and merely file this data with the city. The contract did establish a reopening mechanism whereby the contracts could be modified to incorporate provisions of subsequent contracts in other boroughs, and the city demanded that the operators put up performance security. The two franchises were approved last August.

The two systems already have 30,000 subscribers. Due to FCC rules both operate without distant signals, and instead have built sales hopes around alleviating reception problems caused by tall buildings plus offering an attractive array of sporting events. Home games of New York professional basketball and hockey teams can be seen only on cable, and during New York Knicks championship games last year some restaurants and bars with cable hookups did sellout business.

Analysis of the New York City experience leaves an ambivalent feeling. On the one hand the city wrote a contract far superior to franchises being handed out elsewhere, particularly in its demand for increased channel capacity, public channels, and reopening provisions. On the other, implementation of the contracts suffered from the same sort of municipal thinking that has plagued development of cable from the beginning.

The decision was basically made behind closed doors, in a negotiating session between franchisees and city officials. Nowhere is there a record for determining the basis on which decisions were made. Franchises were awarded for twenty years presumably because the franchisees claimed it was necessary to obtain the large amounts of capital required to build the systems. There appears to have been no attempt by the city to analyze the

validity of that claim or its meaning in light of the financial relationship between Teleprompter and Hughes. A similar argument could be made about engineering specifications. If the city commissioned an independent study of engineering data supplied by the applicants, that fact never appeared on the public record, and no city official confirmed it.

Other communities have made similar or worse mistakes. But the situation in general may be changing for the better. Cities like Dayton, O., and Milwaukee, Wis., have tried to slow the rush-to-judgment atmosphere of cable franchise awards. In Milwaukee, in fact, Mayor Maier vetoed a franchise, not to thwart the applicant (Time, Inc.), but to place before the city council important unanswered questions about the new medium.

Perhaps most heartening, citizen groups have begun to step forward to speak for the rights of the public—at least temporarily halting or slowing the speed with which individual cities grant franchises. The Urban Communications Group in Washington, D.C., whose special concern is minority groups' ownership of and access to media, has used techniques of community organization developed by BEST (Black Efforts for Soul in Television) to stimulate action by black communities and black elected officials. In February, Howard University, BEST, the National Urban Coalition, and the Joint Center for Political Studies sponsored a two-day Urban CATV Workshop for black elected officials. Following that a number of councilmen testified at FCC hearings on cable, and the Urban Communications Group began preparing a handbook for city officials.

In Chicago, through an awareness created in part by *Daily News* TV columnist Norman Mark, the Better Broadcasting Council has ensured that a decision on a local cable franchise will not be made without public hearings, as at first seemed likely. In Boston, city councilman Tom Atkins has been instrumental in encouraging the city to pass an ordinance specifying requirements a potential franchisee must meet before award of a franchise. In Monroe County, N.Y., which includes Rochester, efforts of the local public TV station have resulted in formation of a Community TV Trust to analyze the feasibility of a countywide, interconnected, high-capacity system to be owned

Canada programs for cable

□ Cable television is experiencing impressive growth in Canada. In part because of its ability to bring in the signals of U.S. broadcasting stations (particularly network affiliates just across the border), more than half the homes in Vancouver and Victoria are wired for CATV, and heavy penetration is taking place in Montreal, Ottawa, Quebec, Toronto, and other cities. One of the largest single concentrations of subscribers—in excess of 100,000—is in Montreal. . . . One system operating in a portion of Montreal has been originating programming for about ten years. Subscribers in Montreal have available from ten to thirty hours per week of new local programming, depending on their location within the city. . . .

In order to avoid fragmenting the advertising market available to local broadcasters, the Canadian Radio Television Commission does not permit the cable operator to sell advertising on his own origination channel. (Some exceptions may be permitted where small advertisers lack alternative media in the local area.) Furthermore, the commission looks with disfavor on any cable programming that is highly competitive with that of the broadcasters. . . .

The following is a [partial] list of the strikingly wide variety of programming offered on one or more of the three largest cable systems in Canada; it may serve as a guide to other cable systems now facing the prospect of producing local-origination programming:

Activities of service organizations (e.g., Kiwanis, Red Feather, and Rotary Clubs); kindergarten shows arranged to entertain and educate preschool children; women's programs: fashion shows, modeling tips, beauty hints, etc. (contributing merchants are mentioned in credits); general homemaking advice for women; knitting and weaving instruction; home furnishing and interior decorating for the low-budget housewife; swap-shop programs (individuals call the station with items for sale, and viewers call the sellers directly); career guidance for women, including job

and schooling opportunities; animal care, given by a veterinarian; continuing education and trade counseling for teen-age dropouts and adults. . . .

In addition to FM radio stations provided on the cable as a subscriber service, one CATV system provides three additional FM stations. . . . Each of these closed-circuit FM radio stations caters to a single racial, religious, or cultural minority group. . . . These stations transmit on regular but differing schedules; some operate for only four hours per day, others as much as eight to twelve hours per day. . . . [They] cover births, weddings, and deaths, the visits of notables to the minority community, charity drive appeals for funds, and all other minority community activities. It can truly be said that they provide local news coverage. In general, the closed-circuit FM radio stations appear to be providing an important service—one which should be extended. . . .

Generally, the Canadian CATV systems surveyed do not pay talent fees; although some do not even pay incidental expenses, others pay from \$5 to \$10. Those who appear on the programs are motivated by the desire for experience and exposure. . . . Taking all elements together and amortizing the capital investment over ten years, the total cost of ten hours of programming per week is estimated at no more than \$25,000 to \$52,000 per year (or twice the direct labor cost). . . . The minimum costs for local origination on noncommercial TV broadcast stations in the United States are about \$3,000 for one hour. Our estimate suggests that Canadian cable operators can generate ten to thirty hours per week of new local live programming at an hourly cost of no more than 2 to 4 per cent of this figure. To be sure, the final product is not the same, but the ratio is impressive nonetheless.

—"Cable Television: Opportunities and Problems in Local Program Origination," RAND Corporation, September, 1970.

by a nonprofit group. Rochester already has granted a franchise, but since construction has not begun the countywide group hopes to secure the franchise by legal action.

Perhaps the best example of thorough municipal decision-making has occurred in Palo Alto, Calif. Because the city already provides electric and gas service secured from public power sources at rates about 27 per cent lower than those of nearby communities, it was understandable that municipal operation of a cable system be considered. The first step—possibly the wisest for any city—was to commission a market study to determine consumer awareness of CATV, the quality of present TV reception, the expected number of

subscribers to cable service, and a projected system growth rate. It also was necessary to determine special interests for possible local program origination; to evaluate the long-range potential of revenue-generating commercial services as well as those such as fire and intrusion alarms; and to determine the range of acceptable rates and installation charges. Stanford University, contiguous to Palo Alto, has appointed a three-member committee (an engineer, a communications expert, and an economist) to explore uses of cable by the university, and both groups envision some type of joint planning and operation.

This, in the last analysis, is the ultimate challenge—how to capture the ultimate telecommuni-

cations potential of this tiny wire in a reasonable, efficient, and economic manner. There has been no lack of suggestions for achieving this. Some observers have recommended divorcing the distribution mechanism for programming, forbidding the CATV owner any control over program content. This "common carrier approach" would require a franchisee to lease channels on a first-come, first-served basis. The industry, however, has been generally resistant to this because "common carrier" connotes rate regulation. Nonetheless it seems clear that cable operators should be required to make some channels available as common carriers.

Other authorities propose an institution dedicated to reinvesting income in the system for programming and other services. This concept would rest on formation of a community nonprofit consortium of existing community-oriented organizations which would secure a franchise from the community. It then would sell the same services as any commercial operator and, beyond meeting

operating expenses and providing for capital expansion, would utilize revenues for needed community services. These could include programs on community or regional problems, with citizen participation; computer-aided instruction; vocational training; and political campaign or other nontelevision services as they are developed. As the system expands, services could expand, through the system's own "insulated financing."

There is no guarantee that any one solution is the best for the whole country. What municipal governments and the FCC must determine in the next few months and years is the kind of experimentation in ownership patterns, programming, services, and the like, that they are going to encourage to develop the future potential of the system. In this they should have the benefit of public interest and participation, stimulated by thorough media coverage. Only in this way will we be spared a repetition of errors that have blighted the history of broadcasting in this country.

Hardly-Worth-the-Trouble Department

—AP, Jan. 4.

V16

ktklyx

HONG KONG AP - Eight-
seen "junior diplomats," - news-
paper boys for Hearst newspa-
pers in the United States -
toured Hong Kong's scenic spots
today, visited Chinese sections
of the city and shopped for sou-
venirs.

The boys, aged 13 to 17, ar-
rived Sunday on a round-the-
world tour sponsored by the
Hearst Newspaper Corp. and
Trans World Airlines.

Max Millians of the Hearst
corporation told a news confer-
ence the boys were not chosen
by the number of newspapers
they distributed but by "their
personality and character."

"We chose these boys because
they can speak for themsel-
ves and for their country," he
said. "JD stands for junior di-
plomats and not for junior delin-

V21

ktklyl

CORRECTION

Hong Kong Newsboys kg13,
third graf, make it read at
start: Max Millians of the, etc.
sted Millians.

sr735aes Jan. 4

v26

ktklylyx

CORRECTION

HONG KONG Newsboys v16 in
3rd graf from end delete Chica-
go. No Hearst newspaper in Chi-
cago.

The AP

td1016aes Jan 4

V27

ktklylee

Sub Intro Newsboys V16

Telegraph Editors - The fol-
lowing sub intro deletes refer-
ence to boys being of Hearst pa-
pers. Trip is partly sponsored by
Hearst but not all boys of
Hearst papers.

HONG KONG AP - Eight-
seen "junior diplomats," - news-
paper delivery boys from the
United States-toured Hong
Kong's scenic spots today, visit-
ed Chinese sections and shopped
for souvenirs.

-dash-

in 5th graf make read: He
said the boys represented pa-
pers in Albany etc., deleting
reference to Hearst papers.

-dash-

Heregard v26 correction

The AP

td1102aes Jan 4

How profitable are the news media? How responsive to society's needs?
What reforms are needed? Our Northern neighbor seeks answers.

Canada's media report: mirror of the U.S.?

■ The more separate voices we have telling us what's going on, telling us how we're doing, telling us how we should be doing, the more effectively we can govern ourselves. In this sense, the mass media are society's suggestion box. The more suggestions there are from below, the better will be the decisions made at the top. And in a technological society, the media are one of the chief instruments by which this need is met.

More voices may be healthier, but fewer voices are cheaper. There is an apparently irresistible tendency, which the economists describe as the process of "natural monopoly," for the print and electronic media to merge into larger and larger economic units. The tendency is encouraged by the Canadian tax system.

Let's state the situation in the baldest possible terms by looking at the 103 Canadian communities where a daily newspaper is published or a primary TV station is located. Within these 103 communities there are 485 "units of mass communication"—daily newspapers or radio or TV stations—and slightly over half of them are controlled or partially owned by groups. Of Canada's 116 daily newspapers, seventy-seven—or 66.4 per cent—are

controlled or partially owned by groups. Of the ninety-seven TV stations (including some relay stations), forty-seven—or 48.5 per cent—are controlled by groups. Of 272 radio stations, groups control or own a substantial interest in 129, or 47.4 per cent.

There are only five cities in the country where genuine competition between newspapers exists; and in all five cities some or all of these competing dailies are owned by chains. Of Canada's eleven largest cities, chains enjoy monopolies in seven. The three biggest newspaper chains—Thomson, Southam, and F.P.—today control 44.7 per cent of the circulation of all Canadian daily newspapers; a dozen years ago the total was only 25 per cent. Fully 77 per cent of the circulation of all Canadian newspapers is now controlled by chains.

Chain ownership has rescued more than one newspaper from extinction. Chain ownership has turned a number of weeklies into dailies. Chain ownership has financially strengthened some newspapers, so they're better able to serve their employees and communities. Chain ownership may in some cases have resulted in a decline in editorial quality; but there are also instances where chain ownership has upgraded it.

In terms of public policy, though, this isn't too relevant. What matters is the fact that control of the media is passing into fewer and fewer hands, and that the experts agree this trend is likely to continue and perhaps accelerate. If the trend is allowed to continue unabated, sooner or later it must reach the point where it collides with the

This article is adapted from "The Uncertain Mirror," Volume I of the Report of the Special Canadian Senate Committee on the Mass Media. © Queen's Printer for Canada; Ottawa; \$3.50. Two other volumes, comprising supporting research, also are available: Volume II, "Words, Music, and Dollars," a study of the economics of publishing and broadcasting, \$6.50; Volume III, "Good, Bad, or Simply Inevitable?" selected research studies, \$3.50.

public interest. The Committee believes it to be in the national interest to ensure that that point is not reached.

* * *

The publishing industry as a whole (as distinct from the printing industry) spends a much lower proportion of its revenues on outside goods and services than many other manufacturing industries. In general, the industry spends between 25 and 27 per cent of its total revenues on newsprint, ink, fuel, electricity, and "etceteras," which include everything from buying paper clips to chartering helicopters. It is thus correspondingly less dependent than many manufacturing industries on changes in external conditions—like, say, a hike in the price of newsprint. In fact, if the price of *everything* the industry buys from outside were to increase by 5 per cent, the industry's total costs would increase by slightly more than 1 per cent.

Wages and salaries constituted the largest proportion of total costs, but this ratio remained fairly constant between 1960 and 1966 when it fluctuated between 39.9 and 41.5 per cent. Capital's share increased slightly over the same period, from about 33 per cent in 1960 to 34.5 per cent in 1966. This figure is the gross capital return—which means whatever is left over from revenues after expenses and taxes are met—and this money can be devoted to new capital expenditures, such as printing presses and buildings, or taken as profit. Despite frequent complaints by industry spokesmen about a "cost-price squeeze," the numbers suggest that just the opposite occurred; during the period studied, revenues advanced somewhat faster than costs—not the other way around.

* * *

Under our tax laws, shareholders are taxed only on the earnings they receive as dividends. The remainder—the profits the company keeps in the treasury as retained earnings—aren't taxable until the day they're distributed. The effect is that corporations which keep earning profits build up larger and larger reserves of retained earnings. The shareholders don't mind, because that extra money sitting in the treasury usually means the price of their shares goes up, and the profit they can make

by selling them is tax-free. This situation isn't exclusive to the publishing industry, of course. It's a fact of corporate life.

Thus, the typical profitable corporation—and this applies especially to some corporations which publish large newspapers, which are *very* profitable—finds itself with more and more idle money piling up. What to do with it? Like the Mafia, they're tempted, if not actually forced, to invest it elsewhere. And if you happen to be a newspaper publisher, by far the most plausible place to invest it is in another profitable newspaper.

Over the period studied there was a sharp increase in the proportion of assets invested in affiliated companies—from 10.6 per cent in 1958 to 17.8 per cent in 1967. That increase constitutes an accountant's-eye view of where daily newspapers were putting their extra cash. They weren't spending much of it on new buildings and new equipment—that proportion drops slightly over the ten-year period. What they *were* doing was investing it in other companies.

One of Roy Thomson's most memorable observations was that a television broadcasting permit is "like having a license to print your own money." Ownership of a daily newspaper often amounts to the same thing, except you don't need a license. There are groups of medium-sized newspapers which in at least one year earned after-tax profits (on equity) of 27.4 per cent! The overall after-tax average, for all newspapers over the ten-year period, as a percentage of total equity is between 12.3 and 17.5 per cent. In 1965, which was a great year for the industry, after-tax profits of daily newspapers as a percentage of the amount put up by shareholders was 17.5 per cent. The comparable percentage for all manufacturing industries was 10.4 per cent; for retailing industries it was 9.2 per cent. Owning a newspaper, in other words, can be almost twice as profitable as owning a paper box factory or a department store.

A few other observations on the profitability of daily newspapers:

—If you want to own a newspaper, it's better to own a small one or a large one than a medium-sized one. Companies publishing newspapers with circulation below 10,000 or above 100,000 con-

sistently earned after-tax profits of more than 16 per cent from 1965 onward. Newspapers with circulations between 10,000 and 50,000 were less than half as profitable as the industry as a whole.

—During the period studied, labor costs increased about as much as did total revenues—71.5 per cent. Gross returns to capital, however, increased by 95.2 per cent over the same period.

—Retaining earnings—the profits which a corporation holds back and usually invests in expansion or in other corporations—are much higher

“Media control is passing into fewer hands . . .”

in the daily newspaper business than in other manufacturing industries. This indicates that the industry has been highly profitable in the past, and that its members are probably hungry to acquire other newspapers.

—Share capital and long-term debt make up smaller proportions of total liabilities and equity for daily newspapers than they do for corporations in other industries. This underlines what we know already: that newspapers are less likely than other corporations to borrow or to issue new shares when they need extra money; usually, they can finance expansion and acquisitions from their profits.

* * *

In 1968, Canada's TV and radio stations attracted a total of \$210 million [Canadian] in advertising revenue. These revenues have increased enormously in the past decade or so. Net advertising revenues in the TV industry have grown from \$8.6 million in 1954 to about \$118 million in 1968—an increase of 1,272 per cent! Radio revenues almost tripled between 1954 and 1968.

Programming costs—including salaries, films, tape, talent fees, and performing rights—climb slowly or not at all as the size of the audience in-

creases—*until* you get to the largest revenue category. Then they climb steeply. The biggest TV stations, in other words, spend far more on “quality” than the smaller ones do. This may be associated with the fact that many of the smaller TV stations are the only ones in their market. The stations with the largest revenues are operating in metropolitan markets, where competition exists and where quality programming becomes a competitive factor.

The tables show a striking correlation between size and profitability. In 1968, for instance, only twenty-two of the country's 221 private radio stations without TV connections had revenues of \$1 million or more. Yet these stations—8.4 per cent of the total—accounted for slightly more than 68 per cent of the total net operating revenue of all such stations. Similarly, only eight of twenty-nine TV stations without radio affiliates had revenues of \$1.5 million or more. But these eight large stations accounted for 92 per cent of the total net operating revenue for all such stations!

The other thing to note is how wondrously profitable some broadcasting operations can be. The largest revenue-group of TV stations, for instance, earned a before-tax profit (on equity) of 98.5 per cent in 1964. At that rate, even after taxes, shareholders would recover their entire investment in two years! The big TV stations' worst year was 1967, when pre-tax profits declined to 40 per cent; in most other industries, that kind of margin would be considered fabulous.

* * *

We think the figures set forth are astonishing. There are a number of individual newspapers and broadcasting stations that are having trouble meeting their payrolls. But *on the average* media corporations are onto a very good thing indeed. If the brewing industry made profits half this large, and the people knew it, we suspect there would be sit-ins in the beer stores. Most media corporations—fortunately for them—don't have to disclose these earnings. Because their very large profits allow them to pay for expansion and acquisitions out of retained earnings, most continue as private companies. And so we are confronted with a delicious irony: an industry that is supposed to abhor

secrets is sitting on one of the best-kept, least discussed secrets, one of the hottest scoops, in Canadian business—their own balance sheets!

In a few cases, the corporations concerned are making genuine efforts to deliver quality editorial content and quality programming in return for their privileged economic position. But the general pattern, we regret to say, is of newspapers and broadcasting stations that are pulling the maximum out of their communities, and giving back the minimum in return.

It's not that the companies are charging too much—but that they're spending too little. Too many newspapers and broadcasting stations, in other words, are delivering a product that is not as good as they could afford to make it. They don't try hard enough to improve their product because there is no economic incentive to do so—quite the reverse, in fact.

This give-'em-as-little-as-possible syndrome is reflected in the industry's approach to personnel. Outside those communities where genuine journalistic competition exists, the hiring criterion is frequently not how good a man (or woman) is at the job, but how low a salary they're willing to accept. As a result, newsrooms are chronically understaffed, the turnover in personnel is scandalous, and the best people, unless they have a penchant for personal philanthropy, frequently move on to some other industry, such as advertising or public relations, where talent is recognized and rewarded.

This isn't just a matter between owners and employees. The public is affected very directly, because staff shortages and salary-scrimping mean they're not getting the kind of information service that the industry's profit margins entitle them to expect. The best in-depth stories are often the costliest to get, in terms of both time and money.

The existence of two or more competing newspapers is not an automatic guarantee of improved performance, although it certainly widens the odds. And there is no law that says a monopoly outlet *has* to be mediocre, although there is ample economic incentive for it to become so. If the owner has a genuine commitment to public service, if he places his readers' interests ahead of his own dividends, he can readily offset what the Committee has come to regard as the intrinsic dangers

of ownership concentration. The public interest can be served or ignored, in other words, according to the personal preoccupations of the people who own the media.

And this leads us to what may be the Committee's most fundamental conclusion: that this country should no longer tolerate a situation where the public interest in so vital a field as information is dependent on the greed or goodwill of an extremely privileged group of businessmen.

There are some media acquisitions which appear to have served the public interest. There are others which we think have led to its abuse. The principle is now well established that the state has a right to safeguard the public's right to information by approving, disapproving, or disallowing various property transactions within the broadcasting industry. The Committee believes it is time for this principle to be extended to the print media.

The case for (or against) newspaper chains is finely balanced. As for the two other forms of ownership concentration—mixed-media holdings and

“Media operators are onto a very good thing indeed . . .”

conglomerate holdings—the cost-benefit equation is less ambiguous. In general, we feel, these forms of media ownership are a Bad Thing, unless individual circumstances indicate otherwise. There are not, nor can there be, any sweeping criteria that will determine now and for all time which ownership-concentration situations militate against the public interest.

And that brings us to one of our major recommendations: *we urge the government to establish a Press Ownership Review Board with powers to approve or disapprove mergers between, or acquisitions of, newspapers and periodicals.* The Board should have one basic guideline, spelled out in its enabling legislation: *all transactions that increase*

concentration of ownership in the mass media are undesirable and contrary to the public interest—unless shown to be otherwise.

The Board's authority should be restricted to transactions involving print media only. The Canadian Radio-Television Commission now has authority over broadcasting mergers, and has exercised this power in a series of licensing decisions which add up to an evolving policy.

We believe it is important that the Board's powers be carefully circumscribed by its enabling legislation. It should not be empowered, for instance, to rule on changes in newspaper ownership arising from gifts and bequests. There are still a large number of family-owned newspapers in the country; transfer of these assets from one generation to the next should not be among the Board's concerns.

Similarly, the Board should not be given authority to intervene retroactively. There are a number of areas, the Committee believes, where existing newspaper or cross-media ownership patterns have operated to the detriment of the public interest. But it should be beyond the Board's powers to intervene in such situations—unless the chain or group involved should seek to expand through acquisition of other media.

Legislation similar to what we propose has been in force in Britain since Aug. 5, 1965. The Monopolies and Mergers Act declares that the transfer of a newspaper to another newspaper proprietor, in any case where this would bring the total circulation of his papers to 500,000 or more a day, is unlawful unless he has the written consent of the Board of Trade, after the Board has received a report on the matter from the Monopolies Commission. The Committee's research showed that the British Monopolies Commission, in its five years of operation, has not so far withheld its approval of any proposed merger. But the very existence of the legislation, we were told, has had a deterrent effect; newspaper mergers that are plainly against the public interest don't need to be disallowed—because they don't get proposed.

Beyond the broad guidelines we propose, it would be up to the Board to define its own criteria of the public interest. But we recommend that any such definitions should include considera-

tion of a) whether the proposed merger would lengthen the odds on survival of a newspaper that might otherwise die; and b) what would be likely to happen to the editorial character of the newspaper to be purchased, in view of the purchaser's past performance on the newspapers he already owns, in relation to the profits they generate.

What happens to the catsup or roofing-tile or widget industry affects us as consumers; what happens to the publishing business affects us as citizens. Because of this, we can't regard the operations of newspapers and periodicals as purely local pursuits, of concern only in the areas served by these publications. Their impact, their effect on the national consciousness, their ability to influence public opinion on national issues, make publishing a matter of national concern.

* * *

Regrettably, we could devote an entire book to examples of how newspapers are failing to do their job. The Committee was made aware, formally and informally, of dozens of cases of "news suppression"—instances where editors or publishers were said to have trimmed, killed, slanted, or displayed a reporter's story in such a way as to support an "official" version. Most such cases are practically impossible to document. Human error, honest disagreement over modes of presentation, fear of libel laws, and so on could be cited to explain most of them. But we are satisfied—as are most reporters—that a "party line" does in fact exist in many newsrooms.

Frankly, we don't view deliberate suppression of the news by owner-publishers as much of a problem. It happens, but seldom blatantly. More often, it is the result of a certain atmosphere—an atmosphere in which boat-rocking is definitely not encouraged—and of news editors trying to read the boss's mind. This leads to journalistic sins (of omission, mostly) that result from lassitude, sloppiness, smugness, and too chummy a relationship with the local power structure.

* * *

And what of broadcasting? What about its function in softening the onslaught of change?

People's expectations of radio are not high, it

seems. From our research, it appears that radio is expected to provide quick news, and soothing background music, and very little else. In this sense, private radio in Canada may be deemed successful. Radio broadcasters have often gone further. Many now have open-line programs of some form—an important development in allowing the public some access to broadcasting, and a most welcome one, even though these programs are at times abused, either by the personalities who moderate them or by those other personalities (often every bit as vivid) who telephone the programs to become involved in discussions. But with rare exceptions, radio has gone no further than this.

Canada's television networks, and most of Canada's television stations, have the services of broadcasters who very much want to produce programs of quality, programs of immediacy, programs that will genuinely fulfill the central role of broadcasting. But these organizations also feel a very deep obligation to continue their role as the principal medium for advertising soap, cosmetics, and instant coffee. And the competition between the demands of these differing roles is not being resolved in favor of public service or social responsibility.

Neither public nor private broadcasters, it seems to us, have been notably adventurous in developing, not just new, but new kinds of, programs.

* * *

We contend that publishers and broadcasters should be paying more to the people who produce the product they are selling, and that they can well afford to do so. Their employees are, in fact, subsidizing the extraordinary profits which, as we have already shown, are being enjoyed by all but a few publishing and broadcasting enterprises.

Can the employers pay more? They can. Several publishers told the Committee that newspapers are less profitable than most other businesses. We heard much about the stringencies of the "cost-price squeeze." These myths have been exploded by our Hopkins, Hedlin analysis of industry figures from 1958 to 1968. In that decade, newspaper profits before tax, expressed as a percentage of equity, ranged from 23 to 30 per cent. For 1965 the profit figure was 30.5 per cent as compared with 18 per cent for manufacturing and 15 per cent for indus-

try as a whole. True, expenditures on wages and salaries grew by 71.5 per cent in that period. But gross returns to capital increased by 95.2 per cent. Salaries, in other words, lagged behind profits.

The story in broadcasting is just as interesting. We have already shown that television and radio, except for the very smallest stations, are vastly profitable (with some television stations showing pre-tax profits of more than 90 per cent in a single year). Between 1962 and 1968, wages and salaries in radio increased by 34 per cent while productivity advanced by 47 per cent. In television, pay increased by 39 per cent and productivity went up by 90 per cent.

* * *

When the Committee was in the preparatory stage of its deliberations, it asked media people across the country for their definition of "freedom of the press." Among all the definitions, there appears to be a consensus on at least two propositions: first, that the press possesses no freedoms that aren't possessed by the public at large; press freedom is simply an extension of freedom of speech; and second, the gravest potential threat to this freedom is interference by government.

Media owners tend to warn against this danger at every possible opportunity. We think they are right to do so. When a government seeks to restrict the freedoms of its citizens, the press is always its first target.

But a more likely source of infringement, we believe, is the economic tendencies of the press itself. If government can legislate to ensure a more "diverse and antagonistic" press, it is not interfering in freedom of the press; it is moving to protect a broader, more basic freedom: the freedom of information. Indeed, the Committee can envision a day when government might have to consider intervening, not to preserve a newspaper's freedom to publish, but to establish a citizen's right to have his views expressed in the mass media. Professor Jerome A. Barron of George Washington Law School, Washington, D.C., has already argued that the first amendment to the U.S. Constitution—the one which forbids Congress to pass any law abridging freedom of the press—could be interpreted positively, so as to permit passage of legislation

guaranteeing the public's right of access to the media [CJR, Spring, 1969].

If freedom of expression means anything at all, it must surely include the right to disseminate one's views. We think our studies have shown that this right could be threatened by the media's tendency toward a state of natural monopoly. We hope this tendency can be arrested, so that some future Canadian government will not find it necessary to legislate against the possibility of the public being silenced by its own press.

* * *

What this country now needs to achieve the sort of editorial competition that is our best guarantee of a good society is a journalistic equivalent of the Volkswagen. The Committee believes a "Volkswagen press" is just beginning to emerge in this country, and that it is the most hopeful development in print journalism for many years. The

*"We should
no longer tolerate
this situation . . ."*

Volkswagen press usually appears weekly or monthly, not daily. The Volkswagen press has no room for such journalistic tailfins as lavish color, comic strips, boilerplated travel sections, and other assembly-line features that are convenient for advertisers but frequently useless to readers. The Volkswagen press can be produced relatively cheaply—usually on offset presses—and it does not aim at the total market. This press is primarily designed for readers, not for advertisers. We believe there is a large minority of the Canadian public that will buy that kind of a product.

The Committee therefore recommends the establishment by the government of a Publications Development Loan Fund, with an available annual "draw" of not less than \$2 million, that would assist Canadian publishing ventures in

achieving economic viability. Among the Fund's guiding principles:

1) It would not be in business to underwrite the establishment of new publications *ab initio*. That would be to invite a flood of petitions from publications, which, however potentially "deserving," could never hope to achieve economic viability. Rather, the Fund would receive applications only from publications which have got themselves started and have demonstrated their seriousness by producing a minimum number of issues (say six issues in the case of a monthly).

2) The Fund would consider assistance to publications only if they have attracted sufficient readership to indicate that a readers' need exists and is being adequately served.

3) The applicant publication would be required to have secured a substantial portion of the new financing it requires from private sources; the Fund would not supply it all.

4) The applicant would be required to have developed a feasible, acceptable plan for allocating the additional funds to future development.

5) As a condition of loan, the Fund would nominate one independent director to serve on the board of the applicant company as a watchdog for the public interest, such director to serve until the loan is discharged. (This condition should be gratefully accepted by the borrowers; one reason for the failure of many young publications is that while they may have brilliant editorial direction, they lack a business balance wheel.)

In making this recommendation, the Committee is aware of the policies, and apparent success, of the Canadian Film Development Corporation, and we suggest that the Fund be set up as a corporation on similar lines. The CFDC, set up to administer a \$10 million revolving loan fund, has had a major impact on the recent growth of the Canadian feature-film industry.

* * *

We think many of the problems of the press that this report documents could be alleviated by the existence of a watchdog organization that would monitor the press the way the press monitors society. Public confidence in the press is de-

clining; a press council could help arrest this trend. The media's tendency toward monopoly threatens to restrict the public's access to diverse and antagonistic sources of information; a press council could meet this threat by helping to ensure that media monopolies don't act as though they own the news. Finally, a press council could help to foster a sense of professionalism, and help to develop a set of standards, in an occupation that badly needs them. Even if a press council did nothing whatever, we'd still like to see one set up, because the very act of setting one up would force journalists and publishers, for the first time, to come together on an organized basis to think about what they're doing, how well, and why.

The Committee favors establishment of a press council for several reasons. Perhaps the least urgent reason, in our view, is the need for a journalistic ombudsman. We don't believe the press is fraught with abuses. We believe that instances of newspapers pushing people around and of distorting the news are quite remarkably rare. The entire experience of this Committee, in fact, suggests that a communications vacuum exists between press and public, and that a press council could help fill it. The most common feedback that members of the Committee have received from nonjournalists goes something like this: "Thank God, at last there's somebody we can talk to about the media."

By the very nature of our recommendation, it's not up to us to suggest how a press council should function, or what its terms of reference should be. Nevertheless, we can't resist making a few observations:

1) It should be a national press council, or at least reflect a national presence. Although the council's ombudsman function could best be handled on a regional basis, its other duties require a countrywide platform. We hope it will take the

lead in the evolution of journalistic ethics and standards. We hope it will promote journalistic training. We hope it will continue what this Committee has attempted—to keep a watching brief on economic developments within the industry, and assess their impact on freedom of information. We hope it will undertake research on matters of professional interest, and work with journalism schools to ensure that the kind of research and development that is routine in most industries becomes routine in the newspaper industry too. We hope it will become a powerful lobby on behalf of press freedom and press responsibility that will speak out when governments try to push the press around, or when the press tries to push people around, including its own journalists.

2) We have no prescription as to whether the council's ombudsman activities should be organized locally, regionally, or nationally. That is a matter for the participants to work out. Perhaps some two-tier system could be devised. This way most complaints would be adjudicated by regional or provincial press councils. But the national body could provide an informal court of appeal (the lack of such an appeal procedure is one of the most prevalent criticisms of the British Press Council). With a national body somehow involved in adjudication, it might be possible to evolve, on a case-by-case basis, a set of ethical guidelines that would be applicable across the country. This is the first step toward upgrading journalism from a skilled trade to the status of a profession.

3) Finally, we hope—and we know we're hoping for a lot—that the press council would take the lead in encouraging the formation of community press committees.

We doubt that a press council could achieve as much as we hope. But we hope it would try. As a former reporter named John F. Kennedy once said: "Let us begin."

Transltn problem

— *Boston Globe*, Dec. 27, 1970.

Educational jargon is a tongue all its own—needing transltn

The New Press Critics

SUPPLEMENT TO COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

MAY/JUNE, 1971

SAMPLING LOCAL REVIEWS

One of the most significant developments of the past decade has been the birth of a family of local journalism reviews. The first was *Chicago Journalism Review*, in 1968. The newest, *More*, a New York City media critique, was in preparation at press time. (Pilot issue available through Box 2971, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10017; contributions requested.) This special supplement illustrates the variety and vigor of existing reviews. For subscription information, see supplement's back page.

Cairo

Big Lies Made Big Headlines

Chicago Journalism Review

At least, the Reichstag was burned down. Hitler had that much integrity. He may have stage-managed the whole affair to strengthen his repressive powers, but at least he actually found someone to burn the palace to the ground.

In America these days it's possible for a Law-and-Order demagog to self-inflict horrible and dastardly crimes against his "state" without causing any damage. All they have to do is issue a press release and let the news media handle their PR.

Examples abound; Mayor Daley's revelations of the assassination plots after the police carnage of 1968; those mythical snipers in the black street rebellions across the country; the snipers and rock barrage at Kent State;

(Continued on page 32)

The Day GIs Looted and AP Blinked

AP Review

The invasion of Cambodia by United States ground forces gave the Associated Press and its superb Saigon staff an opportunity to meet the high standards of professionalism for which the world's largest newsgathering organization is noted. The crackerjack Southeast Asia crew met the challenge; the AP in New York blew it. As a result, few American newspaper readers ever found out what was happening half a world away.

Peter Arnett is a veteran war correspondent who has covered Vietnam almost from the start of the American involvement there. He has earned two Pulitzer prizes for his war coverage. His integrity and ability are universally noted among news people. Arnett was with a unit of twenty-five American Sheridan tanks when they rolled into the Cambodian town of Snoul on May 6, 1970.

"American tanks captured the Cambodian plantation town of Snoul Wednesday morning after U.S. airstrikes destroyed 90 per cent of it. The American soldiers celebrated the victory by tearing down the Cambodian flag over the district capital and looting the few shops still undamaged," Arnett reported.

While there are those among responsible newsmen who might legitimately squirm at Arnett's calling the looting a victory celebration, there seemed little doubt that the correspondent had a newsworthy story.

After the U.S. troops "found the town almost totally ruined, with few places left for an enemy to hide," Arnett's story came clattering over the Saigon teleprinter, "the GIs relaxed and began methodically searching through the ruins. One soldier gleefully ran

from a burning Chinese noodle shop with his arms full of Cambodian brandy. A Vietnamese interpreter hauled a case of soft drink to a tank. Other GIs smashed open the door of a small wooden shop and discovered clocks, watches and electrical equipment inside. . . ."

Arnett reported that the troops searched for an hour and a half before an officer ordered: "Get your hands off that stuff, we're moving on."

"The troops, in a jubilant mood, laughed and loaded the booty in their vehicles," Arnett wrote.

Before the story was relayed to U.S. newspapers which take the AP service, all references to the looting at Snoul were deleted.

What the AP foreign desk failed to

(Continued on page 30)

The Davis Debacle

ROLD0 BARTIMOLE

Point of View

"I wish I had a machine gun now. I'd shoot them all down."

Those are the private words attributed to Gen. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., by an admiring councilman. They were aimed at black militants who refused to stand for a pledge to the flag at a city council meeting.

"There are fundamental causes—poverty, living conditions. Until these are removed, or their effects decreased, I don't think anybody is going to come up with very dramatic and immediate changes."

Those were the words of a humbler Gen. Davis to a Detroit reporter before he came to Cleveland as Safety Director.

Davis said recently that he was "trying to constructively instill in the police department a grave concern for the rights of all the city's citizens and innate courtesy for all." But when police without warrants took recorders, cameras, and files from Panthers, Davis saw nothing to investigate. And he told officers privately not to call blacks "niggers," but to use "son of a bitch."

He quit with a blast that Mayor Stokes not only did not support him but gave "support and comfort to the enemies of law enforcement." The charge, unexplained and without the General's naming the "enemies," shook the Administration to its toes.

Davis, who described himself as "a pretty selfish individual" and who equated cooperation with "things being done my way," found that such luxuries as infallibility belong only to popes and generals and then mostly in their imaginations. So his second career ended in less than six months.

Gen. Davis, too, was a victim of the media. The media had inflated his already false sense of worth, an occupational disease of generals anyway.

Even when he quit in a flurry, the *Cleveland Press*, near deadline, had to resort to quoting the last *Point of View* as a source of criticism. The media, aside from the *Call & Post*, a Republican Negro weekly which Davis named among his "enemies," had allowed nary a breath of dissent against the newest Negro leader picked by whites. Yet discontent had been building for months in the neighborhoods and at City Hall, where Davis had become known as "Benny Brownshirt." The contentious Davis was considered a ramrod bore by cabinet members. (In April, he ordered 1,000 colored photos of himself.)

It's really unfair of the media not to let Davis know of his declining popularity. It's irresponsible of the media not to let the entire community know of the growing ill-feeling that was building. Although the media reported incidents that led to the quick disenchantment, they failed to show how Davis' reaction was building resentment.

—Vol. 3, No. 2.

The Day GI's Looted—

(Continued from page 29)

take into consideration when it cleaned up the story for Stateside consumption was that at least two other AP departments, both of which control their own outgoing wires, had access to the Saigon teleprinter. One, the World Services desk, serves overseas newspapers which subscribe to the AP report. It gets the Saigon wire as standard procedure. The other, the Broadcast desk, which serves radio and TV stations throughout the country, happened to be receiving the Saigon report by chance when the Arnett story moved.

The AP was caught in a more embarrassing position than it cared to admit, with an obviously bowdlerized version of a war story on its domestic newswire. The foreign editor thought the desk did a fine job, and congratulated it for "surmounting the problems capably." It is reported reliably that he added in a note to the desk: "We can't let the Agnews seize upon this sort of thing."

The matter seemed to come to a close when the May 18 issue of *Newsweek* noted the discrepancy in a story

headlined: SPIKING THE LOOT. The magazine got in touch with AP General Manager Wes Gallagher, who gallantly admitted he had made "an error in judgment."

"I take full responsibility for the error," *Newsweek* quoted the general manager. "The episode is over."

What *Newsweek* either did not know or did not report, however, is that on the morning of May 6 Gallagher, reportedly enraged by the discrepancy, responded to the crisis by ordering the Saigon teleprinter disconnected in the two departments which had failed to tamper with the truth. The word went out: henceforth all departments would be guided in their war coverage by what the foreign desk saw fit to put on the domestic A-wire.

And just to make perfectly clear what the foreign desk wanted from Saigon, the foreign editor cabled:

WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF A HIGHLY CHARGED SITUATION IN UNISTATES REGARDING SOUTHEAST ASIA AND MUST GUARD OUR COPY TO SEE THAT IT IS DOWN THE MIDDLE AND SUBDUES EMOTION. SPECIFICALLY TODAY WE TOOK LOOTING AND SIMILAR REFERENCES OUT

OF ARNETT COPY BECAUSE WE DON'T THINK IT'S ESPECIALLY NEWS THAT SUCH THINGS TAKE PLACE IN WAR AND IN PRESENT CONTEXT THIS CAN BE INFLAMMATORY.

The cable went on to justify similar changes in another Saigon story, and added:

LET'S PLAY IT COOL

In a flurry of transoceanic telephone calls that day, it is reported that the Saigon bureau chief angrily laid his job on the line, that Gallagher angrily accused Arnett of "blowing his cool," and that Arnett angrily denied he had ever blown his cool in his years of covering the Vietnam war.

Indeed, the episode was not quite over. It was not until months later, when play messages from abroad began to show that overseas use of AP war copy was slipping disastrously as a result of the World Services desk's sending out what was prepared for domestic newspapers, that Gallagher saw fit to restore the Saigon teleprinter in that department. The Broadcast desk never was trusted with the Saigon report again.

—September, 1970

IN-DEPTH REPORTING

AP's story on President Nixon's signing of the no-knock and preventive detention crime bill [A258/July 29] was 450 words. Only fourteen of those words referred to the nationwide opposition the measure sparked. These were in the fourth paragraph from the end: "The measure was hotly debated in Congress, especially its no-knock and preventive detention sections."

—The AP Review,
Aug. 24, 1970

On Being Professional

Chicago Journalism Review

Readers occasionally complain that *Chicago Journalism Review* should be a "more professional" publication. Always anxious to please, we are happy to announce that we have taken the following steps to make C/JR more professional.

- 1) We have hired a political editor whose primary function will be to lobby in Springfield for the erection of an exhibition hall, to be known as "DeZutter Place."
 - 2) We will print serial numbers on copies of the *Review* and award prize money to those readers holding copies with the lucky numbers.
 - 3) We have hired an encyclopedia salesman as our president.
 - 4) We have embarked on a policy of printing our publisher's picture at least once every two weeks.
 - 5) We are inserting the motto THE WORLD'S GREATEST JOURNALISM REVIEW under our nameplate.
 - 6) Our publisher will begin throwing parties for celebrities and will start dating movie stars.
 - 7) We will sharply increase our use of exclamation points.
 - 8) We will refuse to review any theatrical events unless the events have been advertised in C/JR.
 - 9) We will sponsor crapshooting matches and stag movies at our annual staff outings.
 - 10) We will send our financial writers off on trips to Europe, courtesy of the companies they are covering.
- We trust readers will agree that these actions will allow C/JR to take its place among Chicago's respectable journals.

—December, 1970

All the News We Choose to Print

FRANK KEANE

Journalists Newsletter

Did you know there are local stories in the *Providence Journal* that are considered perhaps so sensitive or so technical that the news or financial departments are not permitted to write or edit them?

There are such stories, and, interestingly enough, they are about the *Providence Journal* or its associated companies.

Such was the case when the *Providence Journal* Company bought a cable TV firm in July, 1969, Colony Communications, Inc., which operates Westerly Cable TV and Vision Cable Company of R.I., Inc.

Such was the case, too, this year when *Providence Gravure*, Inc., brought in a new president and made some other changes among its executive officers.

On March 20 the financial department was given a galley proof of a story with accompanying picture of Jack L. Briggs, the president of the *Gravure Company* with the instructions that the story was to run "As is." The financial department followed instructions and the story appeared with its headline: GRAVURE NAMES NEW PRESIDENT—on the financial page of the *Journal*.

One of the duties of the *Journal* copydesk is to read through the paper after the first edition has come out to check for errors, backstopping themselves, the composing room, and the proofreaders. So it was that Harry Bernstrom was reading the financial page and the *Gravure* story thereon and noticed that the headline said GRAVURE NAMES NEW PRESIDENT. But the story didn't say that. The story only said that John C. A. Watkins was elected chairman of the board and that Jack L. Briggs was elected president. At the end of the story there was a paragraph of biography on Mr. Briggs, but no specific reference to his succeeding anybody as president.

So after conferring with Don Breed, who had been the makeup man for the financial page, Harry changed the headline to read: GRAVURE NAMES NEW BOARD, OFFICERS. That was

true and fudged the issue of whether Mr. Briggs was the new president or just a reelected president.

But a check with the clips from last year's *Gravure* annual election story shows that Mr. Briggs was indeed a newly elected president. Because John C. A. Watkins, who is president of the *Providence Journal* Company, was also reelected president of the *Gravure Company* last year. Mr. Briggs' name was not among the list of officers.

So it seems that what has happened here is that Mr. Watkins has been moved upstairs to become chairman of the board and Mr. Briggs has been brought in to run the *Gravure Company*.

Do you suppose the people who prepared the story did not want those inquisitive reporters and copyeditors asking potentially embarrassing questions about this reorganization? The way to avoid that, of course, is to go around the reporters and copyeditors and put the story in the paper the way you want it.

I'll bet *Textron* and *Leesona* wish they could do that.

It seems we have a double standard here. News about the *Journal* and its associates is privileged. Other profit-making organizations are fair game.

What is that motto the *Journal* liked to use in *Editor & Publisher*? Something about Clarity, Competence, and Color, wasn't it? Well, I guess we only have to be clear when we want the reader to know what's going on. And we only have to be competent when we are writing about something other than the *Journal*. That leaves color. I'd color those standards hypocritical.

—April, 1970

Big Lies—

(Continued from page 29)

and, of course, that "vicious [one shot] Black Panther assault" on State's Attorney Ed Hanrahan's men last December.

Now we have Cairo—Cairo, Illinois—the media's latest guerrilla battleground, the place where "squads of armed Negro men" (UPI) or nineteen to twenty "rifle-wielding blacks in Army fatigue uniforms" (AP) shot up a police station. Only they didn't.

This powerful but phony story has spread throughout the world. And it is still spreading. Of the major white media, only the *New York Times* has raised a skeptical eyebrow. And some of the most respectable and "responsible" media—not just the *Chicago Tribune* and its spiritual comrades—have kept the story alive: the *Wall Street Journal*, *Newsweek*, all of the *Chicago* dailies, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, ABC National News (where the story was the number-one item on the Oct. 24 10 p.m. news), Reuters, and, of course, both wire services.

In fact, it was the wire services that started it off with phone interviews with Cairo Mayor Albert (Pete) Thomas, a white mayor in the worst Southern tradition. He told AP and UPI writers, who obviously were not on the scene, that eighteen to twenty black men staged not one but three different armed attacks on the Cairo police station, a limestone fortress that is the tallest building in town and the hardest place to ambush.

The attacks supposedly occurred over a six-hour period Oct. 23 and 24. No policeman or black raider was injured but a white delivery boy was supposedly hit by a stray shot, one block away.

As the story spread across the country and through the informally interlocked national news apparatus, it lost its attribution. Neither wire service actually had a man on the scene during the attack. And if they arrived after the attack, none actually reported the tangible evidence of these daring "guerrilla" attacks.

The female coauthor of this article was on the scene Saturday morning, Oct. 24, less than six hours after the last "attack."

News of the "attack" crackled over the car radio as she pulled into the city of 6,800—360 miles South of Chicago. The reports not only told of the "attacks" but talked about how "State police moved into this racially divided city" and "deployed around the police station and other strategic locations."

She expected to see a battle zone,

shattered windows, barbed wire, boarded-up public buildings, patrols of nervous state troopers with shotguns. She was grooving on the idea of an "armed insurrection," as Mayor Thomas called it, in a sleepy Southern town.

She was surprised to see no outward signs of recent strife, no roadblocks, no boarded-up or broken windows, no visible state troopers "deployed" or otherwise, and no visible damage at the police station. She parked her car in the police lot, walked into the station, and met two paunchy cops.

"I've been sent to write about Cairo from the point of view of the white population," she said.

"It's about time," one said. "These out-of-town reporters buy the line these militants give them every time. And then the bleeding heart liberals send them more money."

"What about the attack last night?" she asked.

"What attack? There's been no attack yet. Oh, we've had some snipers shoot at us here and we expect a big attack every night."

The officer had no name badge and refused to give his name because he wasn't authorized to speak—only the Chief was.

In subsequent interviews with the police chief, the head of the Retail Merchants Association, and Mayor Thomas, himself, no mention was made of the armed attack. Thomas said he was expecting trouble, because of a scheduled demonstration Saturday featuring several nonlocal blacks who came to a conference in nearby Carbondale sponsored by the black United Front of Cairo. But nothing big had happened yet, he said, apparently unaware of the impact of his remarks on the wires.

When she returned to the police station and asked to see evidence of any attack on the police station, she was told there was nothing to see because all the shots hit the limestone. Three nights before the widely ballyhooed triple attack on the police station, the wire services had also told of how a local (white) reporter in Cairo witnessed thousands of rounds of ammunition exchanged between police and blacks at the station. "Hundreds" of rounds were supposedly shot at the station Friday. But there was literally nothing to show for it—at least nothing the police were willing to show.

Meanwhile, in the black part of town, United Front organizers were picking up slugs and assessing the very visible damage caused by at least seventy shots aimed at them. None of these shots was reported in the wire service accounts—even though the

United Front has a telephone and listed number, just like Mayor Thomas.

In a "racially divided town," as the media like to call it, the very least you would expect a professional journalist to do is to check with "both sides." But not this weekend. An NBC camera crew took shots of the one slightly pockmarked section of limestone in the police station, which blacks say has been used for weeks as evidence of black sniper fire. The same crew, from NBC, didn't even bother to come into the United Front office, where hundreds of bullet holes had riddled the walls in the office, in the priests' bedroom and closets, and in the front window. Two of the holes lined up perfectly with the city's highest point—the top of the police station.

But the phony story was good copy, front-page stuff. And as it spread across the country, it even lost its attribution. UPI attributed the story to the mayor and "police"; no names were given. AP attributed it to Thomas and no "police."

By the time the story made *Newsweek*, though, it was established fact. Better than that—as its headline said—it was proof of MADNESS IN CAIRO:

In an apparent act of retaliation for alleged police assaults on Negro residents, a band of armed blacks wearing Army fatigues last weekend staged three separate attacks on the fortresslike stone building that houses Cairo's police station. . . . Governor Ogilvie promptly sent in a peacekeeping force that further underscored the war-zone atmosphere, and equipped them with an armored truck.

The Ogilvie angle on this story elevates this incident from that of just another bungled story to one of major importance. At a press conference Ogilvie justified the deployment of a permanent force of state troopers by citing the attack. He did this even though state police have privately denied that attacks took place on the police station that day. In other words, the Governor knew the attacks didn't occur, but he acted as if they did.

The Establishment media were not the only ones fooled by the story. The leftist *Guardian* even picked it up as its lead item in its "Movement" section. But at least the next week the *Guardian* corrected its story with an excellent two-page report by University of Chicago graduate student David Moberg, who, unlike Chicago's media, actually went to Cairo.

—December, 1970

The Unsatisfied Man's First Annual

DEB BALL QUIZ

Instructions: Below is selected gush from two Denver Post coming-out stories. Some of the gush was written about "the Debutante Ball" (that's the white one). The other passages were written about "Denver's Sixth Annual Cotillion Ball" (that's the black one).

Your mission, should you choose to accept it: Identify the prose as either black or white by checking the appropriate spaces. For example:

Sample Question

"Twenty-seven debutantes, black and beautiful, bowed under a trellis of blue and yellow carnations Friday night. . ."

(The code words here, of course, are "black and beautiful." Therefore, "Black Deb" is the correct answer.)
Pencils sharpened? You may now begin.

- | | Black
Deb | White
Deb |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. "The gala, the brightest star in the yearly social orbit, danced its way into history at the historic Brown Palace Hotel." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. "The affair was held at the Denver Merchandize Mart's grand indoor plaza." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. "From the moment it started until the last waltz, the rooms were wall-to-wall with vintage bloodlines. There was old money, new money and talented young money-makers, and everyone shone and everything moved." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. "About 400 persons attended. . ." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. "Handsome fathers, clad in white tie and tails, escorted their radiant daughters down the stairway and into the rotunda, where the eighteen-year-olds made their curtsies to Mrs. Albert E. Humphreys, Henry C. Van Schaack, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hawley, Gov. and Mrs. John Love, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Hughes Phipps, and Mayor and Mrs. Bill McNichols." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. "It took nearly an hour for the procession to pass through the trellis, as Mrs. Joseph Boston, chairman of the ball, read each debutante's academic and social accomplishments and dreams." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- | | Black
Deb | White
Deb |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 7. "Miss Kathleen Gibson was the first deb to be presented and Miss Sarah Tyler Tweedy was the last. Miss Tweedy made her curtsy, the orchestra switched to a waltz and the fathers, following the long-time ball tradition, swung their daughters across the floor in three-quarter time and then the white-gloved escorts cut in and it was on with the dance for the 1,100 ballgoers." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. "The ball was capped with the crowning of the new year's queen—Deborah Althea Coffey, a senior at East High School." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Picture caption: "CHERYLENE LAVONNE BELLINGER AND ESCORT. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard B. Lewis." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Picture caption: "HER GOWN WAS BY JEAN PATOU. An oversized white-flocked wreath lends holiday sparkle to the gala setting as Mrs. James Voorhees, Jr., pauses on bridge between new and old sections of the Brown Palace Hotel." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. "Those girls making their debuts Friday night, and the schools they represent, were. . ." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. "There was the glitter of Christmas lights, the sound of music and merry-making Monday at the Brown Palace Hotel, but most important of all there were twenty debutantes who made their bows before the city's social elite.
"Debutantes who were presented at the 1969 ball, their parents, and escorts, are. . ." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. "By Pat Collins, Denver Post Society Editor." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. The article with no byline (written by Chuck Green, a Post reporter assigned to the city desk). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. "Mrs. Leigh Norgren was in long-sleeved dress of pale blue satin buttoned with rhinestone discs and tied with schoolgirl sash; and Mrs. Palmer Hoyt wore a ball gown of cameo pink satin." | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Answers: Passages 1, 3, 5, 7, 10, 12, 13 and 15 were drawn from the Post's coverage of the white deb ball. "Black Deb" is the correct answer for questions 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14.

—Cary Stiff,
September, 1970

The 13-Minute Half Hour

St. Louis Journalism Review

The amount of news in a televised newscast will often total less than half the thirty minutes slotted as "news," a spot survey for the *St. Louis Journalism Review* indicates.

The time devoted to news, excluding weather, sports, editorials, and commercials, can dip as low as 12½ to 13 minutes (a timing on KSD on Oct. 19) and seems to take up a maximum of 14½ to 15 minutes (KSD, Oct. 20, and KMOX, Oct. 21).

An allotment of from 13 to 14½ minutes for news seems to be average for the three stations timed, KSD-TV, KMOX-TV, and KTVI. Timing was done for three consecutive days at 10 p.m. and individual spot timings also were made.

Precise measurement is distorted by pauses between news and other items (sometimes 5 seconds) and by inclusion or promotion of weather and sports (2 to 5 seconds) at the end of news items. Introductory themes, announcements, and promos for the 10:30 programs also eat up seconds.

On none of the nights was any news presented from Central or South America, Africa, Japan, China, or any of the Far East except the war zone, nothing from India, and nothing from Europe except a report of Bernadette Devlin's release from jail.

No religious news was presented, nothing from the world of the arts or culture, and the quality of sport "news" was hardly "news." Most of Monday night's sports, for example, was devoted to a recap of the weekend's football results.

It is also of some interest to note which stories are covered "exclusively" by a particular station at a particular time. Sometimes an "exclusive" on a 10 p.m. broadcast may have appeared on a 6 p.m. program on the same station. Such "exclusives" are also found to appear on other channels on the following day. One case in point is KSD's story on the firing of an Eastern Airlines pilot on Wednesday of our survey after KMOX had the story on the day before.

The St. Louis TV stations switched to half-hour newscasts with announcements that they would provide greater news coverage. KSD announced last year that it was expanding its news time, and adding additional slots, to increase local news coverage. The viewer may well be getting more news with 14 minutes from the half hour

compared to what he heard on the old, 15-minute telecasts; he is still far from receiving close to thirty minutes of "hard" news.

Sometimes the news is as much a feature as the weather telecast (which is not to say that features or weather have no place on TV). The marriage of actor Lee Marvin took about 30 seconds of reporting one night and was counted as "news" in the survey. The story would certainly interest some people, but it does not fall into the category of information that is useful in the political and social terms that make "news" as such valuable.

If surveys and general feelings are correct, more and more people tend to use information from the electronic media only as a partial aid in making decisions and adopting attitudes which eventually affect society. We can only hope they watch some local and national documentaries as well as 14 minutes of local news.

—December, 1970/January, 1971

Our violent age: The Lerner chain of neighborhood newspapers carries a "Recipe of the Week" feature in its women's pages. Just before Thanksgiving, a lady reader submitted a recipe for turkey dressing which advised, "Roast at 350 degrees until popcorn pops and blows the ass off the turkey." It never saw print.

—Chicago Journalism Review, January, 1971

A new publication has reared its snooty head in Denver. Its name? *The Unsatisfied Man*. How do we know about the local press drudges' superego trip? We read it in *Time*, where else? We note, as critics, that the national magazine scooped the local papers on this one.

—*The Unsatisfied Man*, October, 1970

Outside Goad

St. Louis Journalism Review

It took a story in the *Los Angeles Times* to get the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* to question Morris Shenker, chairman of the Mayor's Commission on Crime and Law Enforcement, about his reputed multi-million-dollar land holdings in that state.

The holdings, according to the *Times* story, were acquired by Shenker as a result of his influence over selection of recipients for Teamsters Union pension loans.

Breaking the *Los Angeles Times* story on Shenker's accumulation of some \$25 million worth of property in that state over the past five years was Al Delugach, former *St. Louis* reporter. The *St. Louis Journalism Review*, in its first issue, reported that Delugach had left the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* because of his dissatisfaction with the *Post* treatment of the *Life* magazine article alleging business and personal ties between Mayor A. J. Cervantes, Shenker, and organized crime.

Delugach had won a Pulitzer Prize for an investigative series on the Steamfitters while a reporter at the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*. He later joined the *Post* staff and left *St. Louis* late this summer charging that both the *Post* and the *Globe* were not interested in investigating organized crime here.

Picking up the story via *Los Angeles*, the *Globe* credited Delugach with breaking it and identified him as a former *Globe-Democrat*-Pulitzer prize winning reporter. (The paper had not reported his leaving the city before.) In the tradition of *St. Louis* journalism, the *Globe* didn't mention that Delugach had later worked for the *Post*. But then again, the *Post* has not mentioned Delugach since he left at all. Nor did it mention the report that Shenker has allegedly acquired \$25 million in property in California in the past five years.

—December, 1970/January, 1971

Blarney

Chuck Green
The Unsatisfied Man

FOR SALE: The news columns of Denver's daily newspapers. It's a package deal, and it includes the purchase of additional space for traditional display advertising. This offer was successfully used recently by promoters at the Denver Dry Goods Company. The promoters staged an extensive ad campaign, billed as the "Irish Exposition," in mid-September to peddle Irish imports to Denverites.

For buying all that advertising space, the store promoters were given ownership of several pages of editorial space in both Denver papers, the *Post* and *News*. And the promoters were given a professional staff to help prepare the material which filled the "news" space—reporters and photographers employed by the papers.

Scores of staff hours were spent preparing the material. Color pictures were published, false news events were covered, and legitimate news copy was pushed aside. Some stories written during the ad campaign rested idly on editors' desks while reporters were told there wasn't space for them in the paper. Normal news coverage was interrupted several times to cover the promotion.

Undoubtedly the store profited greatly by the promotion. But the papers hardly came out ahead. The image of journalism suffered considerably—in shop and in public. The entire escapade was a blatant notice that the news columns of Denver's dailies, as well as some Irish imports, are for sale.

—October, 1970

Member Views Switch AP Datelines

AP Review

AP has an unwritten rule against using the names of cities in Arab countries in Mideast roundups on its domestic wires. Israeli datelines can be used but not Arab ones. If the roundup originates in an Arab country the roundup is undated.

The unofficial explanation given at the foreign desk is that the Long Island Press and possibly some other member newspapers will not use a roundup that carries an Arab dateline. The rule has been broken a couple of times by slot men who didn't know about it or just didn't want to honor it. Usually, however, it is applied.

—Aug. 24, 1970

Your Guide to Dining Out, or: Making Coco's Sound Like Michel's

Hawaii Journalism Review

Denby Fawcett

One of the least understood and most faithfully read sections of the Sunday paper is the Aloha magazine restaurant guide.

Many readers think articles by Fran-
cee King are legitimate restaurant reviews, not mere tradeouts for the purchase of ads. But that's what they are and there is little to let anyone know differently, except the tiny print on the bottom of the pages that says "HNA Advertising Supplement."

The Hawaii Newspaper Agency contract for each twenty-six-week restaurant ad insures at least one article by Mrs. King. Restaurants consider it a great bargain because the three-inch ads only cost about \$17 a week. And there's no question about the effectiveness of the King articles which are part of the package.

This Sunday she featured the Hanabishi and Doraji Restaurant. Hanabishi ran out of food after serving more than 200 meals in two and a half hours and Doraji, a Korean restaurant, had to shut down its operation temporarily

when it ran out of supplies at 3 in the afternoon.

The HNA also loves the tradeoff because it has given a tremendous boost to its income. When Jane Carey started the guide nine years ago, only five restaurants advertised in the papers. Now there are more than 140.

About the only ones to suffer are the actual diners who all too often are steered to restaurants like the Evergreen in anticipation of what Mrs. King has called "international cuisine." For the unfamiliar, the Evergreen is a modest family eatery and bar on Kapiolani Boulevard.

Mrs. King says she tries to keep it as honest as possible by pointing out only the good things about a place. If the food is horrible, she raves about the decorations or the nice waitresses.

"They can usually tell if the cuisine is not too good if I just write about the atmosphere," she said. But even her boss, HNA Research Chief Wilfred Berman, admits that this kind of subtlety is lost on most people.

Former editor Carey quit about a

year ago because "I just got tired of trading off for these places."

Mrs. Carey also handled the downright bad places by pointing out any good feature she could find. "I didn't say the food was good if it was bad. I'd write about the personalities of the management instead. The crime was that I never said anything bad about a place and I knew too many people were taking the whole thing as gospel."

Mrs. Carey said she asked Advertiser managing editor Buck Buchwach for a legitimate restaurant column, but he turned her down, saying it would cost too much money. She's doubtful that the restaurant guide will ever change because it is now a financial success.

If Mrs. Carey is right, and this outright restaurant advertising disguised as news copy is here to stay, something should be done to let readers know what they're reading. Mrs. King's articles should be headed with an ADVERTISEMENT slug, just as other ads which look too much like newspaper copy.

—February, 1971

Housing for the Poor--at \$18,000?

Albuquerque Hard Times

The Albuquerque *Tribune* may be the most incredibly naïve newspaper in the world. Recent editorials support our judgment, we feel.

One referred to the Census Bureau's findings that New Mexico has the most crowded housing conditions in the forty-eight mainland states. One should recognize from this that we need more housing.

The *Tribune* realized this, too, but having recognized it, it then makes a jump in thinking that is simplistic at best and stupid at worst. Referring to Paradise Hills and Rio Rancho, the *Trib* asked why ecology groups were backing legislation "that would restrict and handicap these builders." The *Trib* went on:

"We believe that the legislature should be doing what it can to encourage the construction of these homes . . . to encourage people to leave the slums of crowded downtown areas and get out to more attractive homesites." The *Trib* further maintained that such housing is being built "in all price ranges."

This is true to a point—and that point is that the lowest-priced house in one of these developments is somewhere around \$18,000, so the editorial should have said "all price ranges above \$18,000."

Most of the people who live in crowded housing don't live there because they like it. They live there because they can't afford anything else. If they had the money to live in Rio Rancho or Paradise Hills, we think people would "leave the slums of downtown and get out to more attractive homesites." Surely the *Tribune* realizes this—or do they?

The editorial is all part of the *Tribune's* never-ending campaign to talk up an economic revival for New Mexico. Talk might be cheap, but the economic revival won't be. . . .

—March 19, 1971

Salesmanship, Archdiocesan Style

Chicago Journalism Review

"Dear Aldermanic Candidate," the form letter begins, "we are sure you know that the *New World* now accepts political advertising, and for this all-important 1971 Aldermanic Primary, we plan a special showpiece for candidates in the pages of the *New World*."

The letter goes on to describe the showplace: a weekly ward-by-ward directory of aldermanic candidates in

which each candidate will be allotted a box for a message at \$35 a throw. "In the event a candidate does not choose to participate," the letter advises, "the space allocated will simply be left blank."

In other words, the weekly newspaper of the Catholic archdiocese of Chicago is shaking down political candidates. Should make for juicy conversation in the confessional.

—March, 1971

One Nation, Under Editorial Writers

Albuquerque Hard Times

The Albuquerque *Tribune* is a Scripps-Howard newspaper. One of the work-saving advantages to being a chain paper is that your editorial writers don't have to concern themselves with national issues. The Scripps boys handle that, and they come up with some real gems. One particularly bad one recently concerned itself with a Maryland county judge's ruling that it was unconstitutional to compel that state's

public school teachers to lead their classes in the Pledge of Allegiance. Scripps-Howard's comment? . . . why any teacher . . . would get himself in such an uproar as to take the case to court is beyond most of us. Might we be so bold as to ask what Scripps-Howard and the *Tribune* would think of a law that compelled editorial writers to lead other people in the Pledge of Allegiance daily?

—Oct. 1, 1970

Local Journalism Review Subscription Information

AP Review

339 Lafayette Street
New York, N.Y. 10012
(Issued periodically; no subscription price listed.)

Chicago Journalism Review

11 East Hubbard Street
Chicago, Ill. 60611
(Issued monthly; subscriptions \$5 a year; U.S. airmail and foreign surface mail, \$7.50 a year.)

Journalists Newsletter

c/o the Journalists Committee
Providence Journal Company
75 Fountain Street
Providence, R.I. 02902
(Issued periodically; contributions only.)

Hawaii Journalism Review

603 Koko Isle Circle
Honolulu, Hawaii 96821
(Issued monthly; contributions only; no subscription fee.)

St. Louis Journalism Review

Box 3086
St. Louis, Mo. 63130
(Issued bi-monthly; subscriptions \$3 a year; foreign, \$2 a year extra.)

The Unsatisfied Man:

A Review of Colorado
Journalism
Box 18470
Denver, Colo. 80218
(Issued monthly; subscriptions, \$6 a year; U.S. airmail and foreign surface mail, \$8.50 a year.)

'Alternate Media' regularly publishing journalism criticism;

Albuquerque Hard Times

Box 4247
Albuquerque, N.M. 87106
(Issued bi-weekly; subscriptions, \$6 a year.)

Point of View

2150 Rexwood Road
Cleveland, O. 44118
(Issued bi-weekly; subscriptions, \$5 a year.)

The Village Voice

80 University Place
New York, N.Y. 10003
(Issued weekly; subscriptions \$6 a year; foreign, \$7.)

FRANCIS POLLOCK

Consumer reporting: underdeveloped region

There is an increasing demand for comprehensive, candid reporting on the marketplace. Why is the supply so limited?

Where were the journalists in the years when Ralph Nader was working on *Unsafe at Any Speed*? If the consuming public doesn't know enough about what it's buying it cannot protect itself, governmentally or otherwise. The way to defend the market system is to be sure that information, an essential ingredient of any healthy market or any healthy democracy, is adequate.

—Max Ways, *Fortune*,
October, 1969

■ Four years ago the Opinion Research Corporation, in a study for the Bureau of Advertising of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, evaluated interest in 240 items of news-editorial matter and advertisements from all media. Of the twenty-five listed subjects in which readers expressed the most interest, six dealt with consumer matters—a total second only to the nine dealing with the Indochina war or war-related deaths. Three of the top six items concerned consumer matters: a new vaccine for a childhood disease, a brand of dried food being removed on order from stores because of a health question, and a mandated reduction in local electric rates.

There is no question that the public is concerned about consumer matters. There also is no

question that the news media have begun to respond to this concern.

In January, 1970, when about fifty persons showed up at a meeting for consumer writers in Washington, D.C., one participant remarked that a similar gathering a few years before might have been held in a phone booth. Today the number of persons writing fulltime about consumer matters is probably closer to 200. At least a dozen major papers have weekly consumer pages or fulltime consumer bureaus, and both AP and UPI have started consumer beats within the past year. In broadcasting, one chain, Westinghouse, has seven consumer reporters, and each of the networks has a handful of people who stay close to consumer affairs.

One experience of Consumers Union provides another measure of progress. Two and a half years ago, CU became concerned about a toy blowgun whose "darts" could inadvertently be inhaled. In Philadelphia alone darts were recovered from the lungs of eleven children. Because more than 4,000,000 blowguns had been distributed for sale in the forthcoming Christmas season, CU sent reports on the problem to nearly every news organization in the country. Not one touched it. Two years later, a CU press conference about eight dangerous toys made front pages across the U.S.

Francis Pollock is executive assistant to the director of Consumers Union, publisher of *Consumer Reports*.

And not long ago, when a consumer reporter who had been invited to address California editors called Ralph Nader for an opinion, Nader declared, "Consumer news really *has* arrived—the *Chicago Tribune* now has a consumer reporter." (The fact is that the *Tribune* has three reporters writing about consumer matters at least part of the time.)

Consumer news may have "arrived" in some media organizations. But its acceptance is far from universal. And serious problems remain. [See "Consumer News: A Mixed Report," Spring, 1967.] One of the most prominent is the attitude of segments of the business community. The dominant tendency to date—at least among some business leaders—has not been to applaud the news media for the kind of candid reporting that, as Max Ways has written, can help protect and foster the market system. Rather it has been, as one observer puts it, to condemn the press and broadcasting for "'distorted' and 'unbalanced' reporting on business objectives, practices, and achievements." This criticism, says consumer-marketing consultant William Nigut in *Supermarket-ing* magazine, is manifested "in efforts to discredit courageous consumer leaders and to mute the media's reporting of news unfavorable to the business community." Evidence of such action is abundant.

When *New York* magazine published the first of its monthly consumer sections last winter, *Ad Daily*, which calls itself "the national newsletter of advertising and marketing," published an editorial entitled WHY SHOULD ADVERTISERS SUPPORT 'CONSUMERIST' MAGAZINES? After listing magazines "waging this undisguised war on business" (the list included *Good Housekeeping*, *Parents*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *Reader's Digest*), *Ad Daily* then suggested that a businessman has no responsibility "to 'support' media which is [sic] obviously out to get him."

William Nigut quoted one marketing executive as proposing to the Calorie Control Council last December that an Association of American Business be formed with a mission of "harnessing the power of the press" on consumer issues. "It's not hard to find stories in our newspapers, magazines, on radio and television that attack one or

more elements of business," the executive said, "but try to find examples of great press coverage where business has fought back." Nigut also quotes Federal Trade Commissioner Paul Rand Dixon as telling the American Advertising Federation that he is "scared" of "Bishop Ralph Nader" and his "pimplly-faced boys." Noting that Nader has had wide coverage in the media, Dixon added, "I haven't any more respect for the media." Business leaders, says Nigut, "have stayed back, hoping that Ralph Nader would blow away, but they now recognize this guy and others like him are here to stay, and they're starting to fight back."

Mention of "harnessing the power of the press" recalls the 1962 boast of Paul Willis, then president of the Grocery Manufacturers of America, that he had met with the management of the nation's top magazines "to discuss the facts of life covering advertiser-media relationships." After pointing out that GMA members would spend \$1.2 billion in advertising in 1962, Willis said "we suggested to the publishers that the day was here when their editorial and business department might better understand their interdependency relationships as they affect the operating revenues of their company: and as their operations may affect the advertiser—their bread and butter." He then related the success of his efforts: a flood of articles that "will surely help to create a better understanding of this industry and a favorable public attitude toward it." Among the magazines which Willis says responded to his urging: *Look*, *Reader's Digest*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *Life*.

A more recent example involved the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*. In April of 1970, Dan Pensiero, Jr., took exception to a *Plain Dealer* editorial chiding the Thomas J. Lipton Company for informing its distributors—but not the public—that one of its products might contain salmonella bacteria. Since Pensiero is the Cleveland area food broker for about thirty national food companies (eighteen of which, he says, "are consistent print advertisers"), he let them know his feelings, too, advising them "it is not in their interest to advertise in the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*." How effective is such advice? "They place their advertising where their brokers ask them to place it," says Pensiero. "Gen-

erally speaking, they'll do what the brokers ask them to do."

Lipton's, through its vice president for marketing services, Oscar J. Nickel, denies that any advertising was canceled. Nickel is contradicted, however, not only by Pensiero but by Lipton's Cleveland area market manager Bert Seibert and by PD advertising manager William Lostoski. The latter insists that the loss amounted to only a few hundred dollars. Regardless of the amount, the PD's business department complained to editor-publisher Thomas Vail.

Only last July, Rep. Leonard Farbstein of New York accused the food industry of exerting advertising pressure in such a way "that the public cannot look to the news media for full and balanced

"No question of concern about consumer matters . . ."

coverage of consumer questions." Farbstein said he had uncovered "more than twenty case histories of supermarkets and food manufacturers attempting to use their advertising to eliminate unfavorable coverage, and to secure favorable coverage under the guise of news." The ultimate objective, Farbstein said, "is to keep the consumer in the dark as to existing abuses and the need for legislative remedies."

The consumer, meanwhile, is getting more testy. In December, when CBS' *60 Minutes* postponed a scheduled report on toy safety for two weeks, it received so many letters from angry consumers that Mike Wallace opened the Dec. 22 program this way:

Two weeks ago on *60 Minutes*, we had scheduled a "Consumer Report" on toys. At the last moment we decided to postpone it till tonight. Seldom have we received more, or angrier, mail.

Between these contending forces stands the beleaguered reporter who believes that journalism must be as free to report on the marketplace as on other subjects, and has made the marketplace his

beat. He often finds himself in muddy waters. Miles Cunningham, who inaugurated the Philadelphia *Bulletin's* consumer beat two years ago at the request of managing editor George R. Packard 3d, says he was given "carte blanche to write 'what had to be written.'" The trouble, at least at first, was that middle-level editors often killed or emasculated his copy on the grounds that such reporting was not what the paper wanted. In time, the situation was corrected, and the *Bulletin* today runs most of the consumer copy that Cunningham writes.

Many consumer writers chafe at obstacles such as the tradition of not "naming names." Several note that it is not enough to be able to document shortcomings and let the other side be heard; they sometimes are required also to defend their "intent" before a story will be considered for publication. Because the consumer reporter's beat tends to be wide-ranging, there are occasional and unavoidable conflicts with other departments (particularly food, real estate, and business), which complain if an outsider ventures into their territory, especially if his reporting points up shortcomings in their own coverage. And because vigorous consumer reporting not only raises the specter of lost advertising but also of libel suits, reporters and editors often are warned by well heeled business interests that lawyers will "be looking carefully" at what they publish. Such veiled threats, though usually bluffs, are never taken lightly.

One of the most memorable examples of the tangle which is likely to result can be found at the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. In spring of last year the paper announced in a headline its intent to be "first with consumer coverage." Douglas Bloomfield, twenty-eight-year-old staff member who had distinguished himself as a diligent and perceptive aviation writer, was assigned to the beat. But no sooner had he begun than trouble occurred.

On April 21, he wrote a memo to city editor William Treon calling attention to the weekly recall reports of the Food and Drug Administration and the Federal Trade Commission. Noting that the recalls had received little attention, Bloomfield suggested they would make good sidebars for the paper's regular consumer coverage. The response to his suggestion came six days later, not from the

city editor, but from executive editor William Ware, who ruled that the lists could be run, if newsworthy. If any local retailers were mentioned on the lists, said Ware, they should be contacted for comments. This policy, he wrote, evolved from discussions with the paper's general manager and advertising manager. Then came the salmonella incident, and area food broker Pensiero's campaign.

Thus when another recall case occurred the going was rougher. Shortly before Halloween Bloomfield reported an FDA recall of 839,000 candy bars because of suspected rodent-hair contamination. (Rodent-hair contamination is something of a euphemism. What it is understood to mean is contamination by rodent feces. Rodents, in cleaning themselves, pull out hairs, ingest them, and expel them in their excrement. The excrement diffuses, making it difficult to locate microscopically or chemically, but the telltale hairs remain.) Bloomfield's story about the contaminated candy bars was forwarded to Ted Princiotto, night managing editor, and apparently stayed with him. Two weeks later, on Oct. 29, an AP story about the recall got two paragraphs in the paper.

Other Cleveland media made much more of the candy recall. And on Halloween Day the paper did run a locally written story about the recalls, but not Bloomfield's. It was written by Janet Beighle, the *PD*'s home economics editor. Miss Beighle's story was headlined **CANDY SCARE IS MINIMAL HERE**, and featured such reassuring but somewhat oversimplified statements as, "Rodent hair, while not esthetic, is probably harmless."

About the same time, Bloomfield asked for and received permission to do a story on prices of prescription drugs in the area. Similar stories had been done in other cities, and widespread discrepancies had been found in prices for filling identical prescriptions. Executive editor Ware says he approved the proposal. Bloomfield's story showed that the price for the same drug (thirty capsules of tetracycline) ranged from \$1.79 to \$4.80 in thirty drug stores, and prices were slightly higher in low-income areas than in middle- and upper-income areas.

The story was spiked. Bloomfield discussed it with city editor William Treon, who, Bloomfield

says, responded that he hadn't taken into consideration "the different costs of doing business, or the rents for different stores." Russell Reeves, the *PD*'s day managing editor, says: "In the ghetto stores, where the prices are higher, there's a greater percentage of pilferage, and this would be reflected in their drug prices. Of course, there was no explanation of that."

But there was an explanation, in the fourth take of the story Bloomfield submitted:

Higher prices were common in poor neighborhoods. Pharmacists say there are many good reasons why. The cost of doing business is frequently greater in such areas, they explained. Insurance is hard to get, if not actually impossible in some places. It also is difficult to hire people to work there. Crime problems are greater—there are large losses due to shoplifting, holdups, and the like.

"Obviously," says Bloomfield, "they were just looking around for an excuse to kill it and if they hadn't used that angle they might have disliked the way I set the margins on my typewriter."

Last fall, after friction over several other features, including one in the Sunday roto section in which Bloomfield had taken no part, Bloomfield went on leave for a Congressional fellowship. Executive editor Ware says the paper has not been able to find a "suitable" replacement, but that it has no intention of short-changing consumer news. A man in the Washington bureau has been given primary responsibility, mainly, says Ware, because "most of the initiative for this consumer news is coming out of Washington." (Ware declined to say if Bloomfield would be reassigned to the local consumer beat when his leave of absence is concluded.)

Meanwhile, the *Cleveland Press*—the apparent beneficiary of at least some food company dissatisfaction with the *PD*—does not appear even to have attempted the kind of reporting that seems so needed. Herb Kamm, associate editor of the *Press*, says the paper does not see a need for a fulltime local consumer reporter: it has access to material from Washington by Ann McFeaters, Scripps-Howard consumer reporter, and local consumer stories can be handled by general assignment reporters.

The fortunes of consumer reporting, then, remain uncertain, and advertiser pressure could

tend to keep things that way. What should be done?

One corrective, it would seem, would be more publicity about incidents of advertiser pressure. No self-respecting editor would knuckle under to a politician's threats. Indeed, when it appeared Vice President Agnew was trying to intimidate the news media, press organizations began passing resolutions and editorial writers blazed back in retaliation. Why cannot the same techniques be used to counter attempted sabotage of independent consumer reporting? Getting the issue above board and keeping it there can have as salutary an effect on business mores as did revelations of the fact that General Motors had hired a detective to investigate Ralph Nader.

Other suggestions, from a group of editors, consumer reporters, consumer leaders, and press critics who were asked about the situation, begin with overcoming the reluctance to "name names."

About a year ago, the *Record*, based in Hackensack, N.J., ran a syndicated series about inflated claims of the cosmetics industry. "In a recent advertisement in an expensive woman's magazine," the first article related, "a cosmetics manufacturer promised his product would make readers look

"Papers could publish comparative price lists . . ."

radiant by 'shedding dry wrinkles, sallowness, and nasolabial folds.' His wrinkle remover costs from \$14.95 to \$46.50. But it isn't worth two cents as far as removing wrinkles is concerned, according to . . . experts to whom I showed the product."

Observing that the product name was missing from the account, one reader wrote the paper: "Suppose your film critic wrote: 'In a recent film showing at an expensive Hackensack theater, the distributor promised great titillation of the viewer's senses, but it really isn't worth the price of the ticket according to knowledgeable moviegoers with whom I discussed the film.' What is so sacred

about a phony cosmetic product that prompts you to play games with your readers?" Similar absurdities occur again and again in action line columns with a policy of not "naming names."

There are, of course, occasional legal problems connected with use of brand names, but they are no different in principle from those encountered in reporting other kinds of news. And there is a question whether law firms for news organizations have fully explored protections afforded by the fair comment doctrine.

Another undesirable practice to be eliminated is casual prostitution of editorial space. Every BUSINESS OFFICE MUST that an editor sets into type is an admission that he and his news organization have sold off a little more of their professionalism to the highest bidder.

There also should be a complete reevaluation of each department for its consumer service potential. Often this will not only reveal casual prostitutions but also what Walt Wurfel, editor of *Straus' Editor's Report*, calls the "sins of omission." These sins are found in abundance on food pages, where the possibilities of genuine consumer service are limitless but too often readers are given little more than recipes, food-industry boilerplate, and an occasional Department of Agriculture listing of the most economical meat and vegetable buys of the month.

Newspapers could publish complete comparative price lists. Compiling such lists would not be as difficult as might appear, and certainly not as revolutionary (one need only turn to the stock tables on the business page for guidance). Such a list would have several desirable effects: it would enable housewives to make rational price comparisons that are now virtually impossible, and it would undoubtedly engender far more loyal readership, presumably making those papers even more attractive to advertisers.

Food pages also could regularly tell the housewife which stores, if any, had been found to be selling tainted foods or short-weighting meats. They might regularly and prominently run the Food and Drug Administration recall lists of adulterated foods—not only so that shoppers wouldn't buy them but so they could remove them from their own pantries. Papers could also give aid on

home economic issues that they now soft-pedal or overlook entirely—issues such as unit pricing and open-dating. These could be discussed vigorously, but by and large they are not. If any attention is given them it seems that it is usually in other sections—and only then in connection with an “event” such as consideration of a bill in the legislature.

Consumer-minded evaluations of other sections could turn up similarly useful features. Travel departments, as Stanford Sesser pointed out in *CJR* in Summer, 1970, abound in prostitution of consumer interest. Faced with the problem of wrapping copy around lucrative travel advertising, many editors willingly print articles distributed by feature syndicates, some of which, as Sesser states, “are paid by resorts, airlines, or other interests to distribute glowing reports.”

As a start toward better consumer service, the travel sections might open letters-to-the-editor columns to reader give-and-take, as the New York *Times*’ travel section does. Other consumer features which might be added: periodic reports on the amount of lost baggage, with, of course, the airlines’ names (the publicity probably would stimulate better service); features on how to get the most economical travel rates; surveys of reader experiences with travel agents, resorts, and airlines; and any other report that would help the consumer get better value for his travel dollars.

Criticisms of real estate sections made by Ferdinand Kuhn in *CJR* [Summer, 1966] remain valid. Suggested reforms included turning the sections loose on “news stories, letters, and editorials about highways and bridges, slums and blight, growth and crowding.” As Kuhn accurately pointed out, “There would be more room for serious news and discussion of the metropolitan future if publishers would clear their real estate junk.”

Editors might also work over their entertainment sections with a view toward delivering information more rationally. Perhaps somewhere among the ads with out-of-context quotes the entertainment editor might insert capsule reviews of all the plays and movies in town—summaries based on the original reviews. Such listings, now run by at least a few papers, particularly aid those readers who didn’t see or don’t remember the originals.

News organizations could, if they wanted, advise

their readers on how one bank’s savings plans or mortgage loans compare with those of other area banks. The Rochester *Democrat & Chronicle* has already done this with Christmas clubs maintained by banks in its area. They could, if they wanted, compare rental car rates. Or, as the Minneapolis *Star* did, print comparison charts of the octane ratings and prices of gasolines.

They could go even further, into evaluation of goods and services. Papers regularly dole out advice

“ ‘Readers are
clearly telling us
what they want . . .’ ”

on specific stocks in their investment columns; few sports editors hesitate to inform readers of the relative merits of boxers, football quarterbacks, World Series opponents, and whatever else strikes their fancy; and not an editorial page in the country would shirk from sizing up political candidates. News organizations must resolve the paradox of evaluating movies, plays, books, stocks, basketball teams, and political candidates but not evaluating essential consumer products and services.

The New York *Times* is gingerly getting into product evaluations. Since the first of the year it has published an evaluation of Chevrolet’s Vega (“a competent car with fine roadability characteristics, although, as in all mass-produced automobiles, there are deficiencies of detail”) and Ford’s Pinto (“the Pinto is a delightful and handy car in certain circumstances”). It even did an evaluation of sorts of the water bed, reporting, among other things, that there is legitimate concern that users might be electrocuted by the heating unit should the bed leak. There should be many more such stories.

The low-income consumer, forced to do business in what Sen. Warren Magnuson and Jean Carper call the dark side of the marketplace, is subjected to some particularly outrageous prac-

tices—all the more pernicious because they often have the sanction of law. Certainly, greater attention by the media to reposessions, sheriffs' and constables' sales, garnishments, and the like could shed light on the question of who profiteers at the expense of the poor.

Citizens must know much more than they do about the strengths and shortcomings of their hospitals and nursing homes, of the quality of municipal services, of the performance of the schools. And on and on. If staff members are incapable of evaluating these or less complex products and services, a paper could easily retain consultants.

News organizations have a vast distance to go before they can really boast of serving the consumer. But some are making great strides.

One is the Troy, O., *Daily News*, whose thirty-three-year-old editor and associate publisher, Thomas Pew, Jr., convincingly backs up his words that his paper's first obligation is to its readers. At the obvious expense of some profits, Pew has a staff of twenty-one writers and photographers, something unheard of for papers that size (10,000 circulation). No business gets special treatment, including the *Daily News*—which, in a recent front-page series, identified itself as one of the polluters of the nearby Miami River which flows through Troy. The paper runs every signed letter to the editor ("regardless of how critical it is of the newspaper"), and has, in each of the past three years, sent a reporter to Vietnam.

Pew's policies about consumer news are refreshingly professional: "We try not only to give our readers as much consumer information as we can that's been worked out at the national level," says Pew, "but whenever we get such things, we pick them apart and apply them to our local situation." A few years back, when the paper was running a series about Ralph Nader's *Unsafe at Any Speed*, Pew says all local car dealers but one ("he had a contract with us") pulled their advertising. They came back within a few weeks. "You can't sell autos unless you advertise," says Pew with a chuckle.

New York magazine, evolved from a *Herald Tribune* supplement, has placed increasing emphasis on consumer-service features since its emergence as an independent publication in 1968. It started with "The Underground Gourmet," an honest guide to good low-cost New York restaurants, and was followed with "The Passionate Shopper," a guide to smart buying in New York City. "These things got incredible responses from the readers," says editor Clay Felker, "and so we decided to expand and add a third section, 'The Urban Strategist.' This covered not how to buy something, but how to get along in New York City." This was followed by periodic articles critically evaluating some of the city's most fashionable restaurants.

New York's biggest stride into consumer service was the addition last December of a monthly pull-out section, "The Guerrilla Guide for the Consumer—a Field Guide of Strategy & Tactics for the New York Shopper." The main feature in the first section was a guide to food freshness codes in supermarkets. Another was a how-to-complain guide, listing the phone numbers of presidents of New York's largest consumer companies. The issue was the largest seller in *New York's* history. "The readers," says Felker, "are very clearly telling us what they want."

There is no lack of hopeful signs. Some encouragement is to be found in the increasing responsiveness of news professionals, particularly the younger ones, who are insisting more forcefully than ever that a news organization must face up to its new responsibilities to the public. Encouraging, too, is a growing realization on the part of some editors and publishers that they must respond more adequately to consumer needs. But perhaps most encouraging is the emergence of people like Clay Felker and Tom Pew, who have the somewhat iconoclastic notion that—advertiser threats notwithstanding—a medium's first obligation is to its readers or listeners or viewers, and that one can make a decent living serving them well.

Cause and affect

— Chicago Sun-Times, Dec. 29, 1970.

Study finds stresses effect many Catholic priests

For years there has been little genuine press competition in the 'City of Brotherly Love'. Now there may be a Renaissance.

The Knights invade Philadelphia

EUGENE L. MEYER

■ On Feb. 1, 1970, Philadelphia's two Sunday newspapers ran short stories about the shooting of two black teenagers, one fatally, by police in a stolen car chase. The incident was treated like a routine crime story. A month later the morning *Inquirer*—which on Jan. 1 had been purchased along with the afternoon tabloid *Daily News* by Knight Newspapers, Inc.—carried another story on the shooting. Under the front-page headline **BOY DIES OF POLICE BULLETS: TWO VERSIONS**, it presented eyewitness accounts, based on signed affidavits, that the youths had been beaten "viciously and needlessly" by highway police. Seventeen-year-old Hal Brown, witnesses said, was beaten after he had been fatally shot.

The *Inquirer* investigation raised serious questions about the law-and-order administration of police commissioner Frank L. Rizzo, widely regarded as the nation's "toughest" cop and now a candidate for mayor. Rizzo had enjoyed a close relationship with the former *Inquirer* owner, Walter H. Annenberg, the Nixon Administration's ambassador to Britain. Annenberg, an outspoken hardliner on many issues, occasionally had ridden around with Rizzo to view "crime in the streets"

firsthand. In fact, Rizzo had reigned as Philadelphia's police commissioner with near-unanimous support of the city's press. Shortly after his men battled black high school students outside the school board headquarters in November, 1967, the commissioner received a lengthy standing ovation at a Philadelphia Press Association dinner.

The *Inquirer* story resulted in prosecution of two policemen and a political donnybrook between Rizzo, the district attorney, and a liberal city councilman. Charges against the policemen were dismissed—but the significant thing was that the story even surfaced. In clubby, don't-rock-the-boat Philadelphia, amid a stampede to avoid being labeled soft on crime, the decision to run the story was a major display of courage. It also demonstrated that being part of a newspaper chain—outsiders in an ingrown town—could mean more "independence" than hometown ownership. The *Evening Bulletin*, which added INDEPENDENT-LOCALLY OWNED to its nameplate when the Knights appeared, had reported the incident routinely and failed to follow up.

For years Walter Annenberg had operated the *Inquirer* and other portions of a media empire as a kind of Hearstian fiefdom [see review of *Annenberg*, Spring, 1970]. Eight-column banners and inaccurate and often slanted reporting were *Inquirer* trademarks. Annenberg simply kept news

Eugene L. Meyer, who formerly covered city government and urban affairs for the *Philadelphia Bulletin*, now is a reporter for the *Washington Post*.

about people he didn't like out of the paper. The list was ever changing. It ranged from Gaylord P. Harnwell, former president of the University of Pennsylvania, to the entire 76ers basketball team. Under Annenberg, convicted extortionist-reporter Harry J. Karafin flourished for years before being exposed by *Philadelphia* magazine. Also during Annenberg's ownership, weekday circulation slipped below the magic 500,000 mark, after a steady, slow decline of several years.

If the *Inquirer* had a reputation as reckless and ruthless, the *Evening Bulletin* was always Philadelphia's newspaper of record, dull but dependable. Owned by the McLean family, it was known as "the old gray lady of Filbert Street" until the 1950s when it moved sixteen blocks west to a new four-story plant at Thirtieth and Market Streets. The change of address, however, did not preserve the paper's record circulation of some 740,000, which has slipped by 100,000 in the past ten years. (The *Bulletin* still leads in daily circulation, the *Inquirer* leads on Sunday. The *Bulletin*, however, is closing the gap.)

Between the giants is the tabloid *News*, which Annenberg bought in 1957 from builder Matthew H. McCloskey. With roughly 230,000 circulation, it serves as a holding device against the *Bulletin* in evening circulation. Heavily crime-oriented, with a daily dose of pictorial cheesecake, usually on page 3; some colorful writing; a small but spirited staff—that long has been the *News*.

Neither of the top two papers, though widely promoted, has really excelled. When the Knights arrived on the scene the Washington bureau of the *Bulletin* consisted of four people, that of the *Inquirer*, two. Neither paper had a national or foreign staff, relying instead on the news services. Indeed, the most enterprising local publication in recent years has been *Philadelphia* magazine, which grew from a Chamber of Commerce puff periodical into a newsmaking magazine with a national reputation. It touched stories the papers wouldn't, exposing the *Inquirer's* Harry Karafin one year and the misuse of funds by the Pearl Buck Foundation for Amerasian children another.

It was into this stagnant pool that the Knights plunged, almost immediately making waves. Chief wave-maker was the *Inquirer's* new executive edi-

tor, John McMullan, a stocky, curly-haired man in his middle-40s. McMullan clearly meant business from the start. Before the police brutality story ran, for example, *Inquirer* city editor Harry Belinger reportedly ordered the rewriter to read it by phone to Rizzo. The police chief, furious, called Annenberg in London. Annenberg was sympathetic and called Joe First, a holdover from the Ambassador's Triangle Publications in Philadelphia. First communicated Annenberg's views to managing editor John Gillen, another holdover, who confronted McMullan. Legend has it McMullan shot back: "Walter Who?"

Rizzo didn't give up. He phoned the police chief of Miami, where McMullan had been executive editor of the Knight-owned *Herald*. He learned that McMullan, a Georgia native with a law degree from the University of Miami, was not anti-cop but pro-cop. "If the Commissioner doesn't mind," McMullan rejoined in a Sunday column he writes occasionally to discuss news policies, "we'll just make that pro-public." He added, "A newspaper, if it merits its Constitutional guarantee of freedom, must be an independent force in a community, beholden only to the public it serves."

Under McMullan's generalship the *Inquirer* has engaged in other skirmishes. When police raided three Black Panther offices last September, *Bulletin* and *Daily News* reporters and photographers were invited along; the *Inquirer* wasn't. While the two afternoon papers for a time looked like the *Police Gazette*, the *Inquirer* revealed prominently that the story had two sides. It ran a front-page report (WHY? TWO OPPOSING VIEWS), indicating that black communities, while not necessarily approving of the Panthers, viewed the raids as white racism. It also raised more questions about police actions: a story on page 3 told how police needlessly fired into an adjoining building.

McMullan has demonstrated his independence in other areas. Last fall, he withdrew the *Inquirer's* entries from the annual Philadelphia Press Association contest. Skeptics said it was sour grapes (no *Inquirer* entries made the final judging), but McMullan insisted his objections were to the procedures, which heavily involve local newspaper editors in the initial judging. "In my view," McMullan said, "it is a phony contest. There is no

point in trying to win a contest in which judgments are made by the people who entered it."

Unlike the *Bulletin*, where rival factions vie for power, there is no question about who runs the *Inquirer*—the Knight management has given McMullan full authority. New people have been brought in from elsewhere in the ten-paper chain, mainly at the executive level. Holdover managing editor John Gillen and city editor Robert Greenberg (who was moved up after the Hal Brown police brutality story) reportedly have little to say any more. The new management also cleaned house at the reporting level, hiring a number of new reporters, demoting veteran political reporter Joe Miller, and virtually replacing the entire City Hall bureau with younger staff members. The state capital now is covered by a resident correspondent. And specialist labels have been so generously distributed (there is even an editor in charge of specialists) that some reporters complain there are few competent rewriters and generalists left.

McMullan has deemphasized hard news and the once-prominent sensationalized police and fire reporting, emphasizing instead depth reports, news analysis, and features. Still, *Inquirer* reporters complain, though the management may remain calm, the daily desk reacts sharply when the *Inquirer* is scooped on a hard-news story.

There has been no repetition of such political "hatchet jobs" as that of 1966, when orders filtered down from Annenberg to "get" gubernatorial candidate Milton Shapp. Democrat Shapp lost in 1966 but won last fall. Throughout the campaign the *Inquirer* remained editorially neutral and coverage was scrupulously fair, down to matching column inches and prominence of display for the two major candidates.

The *Inquirer* also has begun carrying staple Knight features such as John S. Knight's Sunday "Notebook" and a local Action Line, staffed by twelve people and quartered one floor above the fifth-floor newsroom. Daily comics have been expanded from one to two pages, more syndicated columns have been added to the Op Ed page, and a new Friday weekend page has become popular. (Several months later the *Bulletin* added a similar weekend section.) The Knights' Washington bureau has supplanted the *Inquirer's* former two-man

office, supplementing the Washington *Post*-Los Angeles *Times*, AP, UPI, Dow Jones, and Chicago *Daily News* wires. And the Knights, who paid \$55 million for the *Inquirer* and *Daily News*, are spending more than \$12 million on new presses, engraving and composing equipment, and circulation efforts.

The tone of the editorial page also has changed radically. Under Creed C. Black, former Wilmington and Chicago newsman and Assistant Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, the editorials are no longer knee-jerk conservative but thoughtful moderate-to-liberal. The soft-spoken Black holds the title of editor but his power appears limited to the editorial and Op Ed pages.

Occasionally, however, there are shades of the "old" *Inquirer*. Shortly after the election there appeared a tasteless open letter to Mrs. Muriel Shapp in which fashion writer Rubye Graham told how the First Lady should dress. It was removed after the first edition. A series on highways echoed the Chamber of Commerce line: an installment on the controversial Crosstown Expressway was extremely weighted in favor of highway builders, including no statements from dissenters (who have since won out).

Some critics complain that the new management goes after the easy, soft investigation. As an example they cite a long series on defects in the new South Philadelphia stadium, considered "old news" and insignificant. An "in-depth" report on drugs by two reporters also failed to produce much that was new. Following a *Bulletin* series which at one point described drug purchases by reporters, the *Inquirer* sent out a reporter, with phony needle marks on his arm, to "cop" heroin. McMullan claims that "we did the first series on drugs here." But the *Bulletin's* Claude Lewis did an excellent series on heroin before the Knights arrived, resulting in Pennsylvania's first methadone program.

Inquirer medical writer Donald Drake worked for a week at the Philadelphia General Hospital and wrote a series documenting deplorable conditions at a time when the mayor wanted to cut PGH's budget. *Inquirer* real estate editor Oscar Teller chronicled the decline of developer Martin



Philadelphia Story, 1971

Decker's empire, a story which would not have appeared—much less run on page 1—in the old days when real estate stories were strictly fluff. The *Inquirer* reported that the chairman of the state board that sets milk prices also owns a dairy, giving him a vested interest in his public decisions. And the paper raised the conflict-of-interest question in a Dec. 6 investigative report on the business interests of a member of the Bicentennial board. Reaction was strictly partisan, with the *Bulletin*, in a departure from the longtime custom of never criticizing the opposition, editorially critical.

At the tabloid *Daily News* the Knights have installed thirty-eight-year-old Rolfe Neill, formerly assistant managing editor of the New York *Daily News*, bypassing aging, old-school managing editor J. Ray Hunt. Like McMullan, Neill is undisputed boss. He returned Harry Belinger to his old job as city editor after Belinger left the *Inquirer* in pique over the police brutality story—but, says a *News* staff member, Neill has “put the job in perspective.” Also like McMullan, Neill has had run-ins with Rizzo. He rapped Rizzo editorially for efforts to cancel a peace-rock concert and for police actions during the Black Panther raids. Another time Neill turned down a personal appeal to spike

a doctored feature picture of the commissioner on a motorcycle, with peace medallion and top hat.

Neill is known for churning out memos assigning what one staff member describes as “un-Daily *News* type stories, in-depth stuff, the kind of stories reporters want to do.” He began his Philadelphia career wandering the city instead of mixing with the Establishment, choosing to view the Quarry-Muhammad Ali fight in a ghetto theater with *News* columnist Tom Fox. “Rolfe has less difficulty with the younger members of the staff,” says one, “because as management he is out there, too.”

Meanwhile, activity has intensified at the *Bulletin*, centering around a battle between adherents of the Front Page and the New Journalism. For years the system there worked to discourage initiative. There was no communication, no channel for complaints, no comprehensible chain of command. There was no planning, no coordination.

The *Bulletin* did have some unwritten policies. It was above all provincial—it used to be said that if an atomic bomb fell on Manhattan the *Bulletin* would print: TWO PHILADELPHIANS KILLED IN NY NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST. The *Bulletin* also had a white suburban bias—most of its editors lived in the suburbs. Its view of Philadelphia was also that

of the city's Establishment, to which its owners have close ties. (After the *Bulletin* city hall bureau chief died two summers ago the paper's publisher discussed his replacement with a Chamber of Commerce official who since has become Republican candidate for mayor.) And management has had a somewhat exploitive attitude toward reporters. Protected by the Newspaper Guild, the *Inquirer* staff, even under Annenberg, always had a measure of job security, acceptable wages, and self-respect; at the non-Guild *Bulletin* many journeyman reporters earn under \$200 weekly.

George R. Packard 3d, a progressive-minded scion of Main Line wealth who is still in his thirties, promised to try to end all that. After a twenty-year absence from the city—during which he earned a doctorate, served with Ambassador Edwin O. Reischauer in Japan, and was chief diplomatic correspondent of *Newsweek*—Packard was hired by the *Bulletin* to bring change.

However, Packard fired or demoted no one; the deck of cards was the same, only slightly reshuffled. Packard did promote a small group of younger, more progressive men into different positions. But the power equation was not in his favor. Sam Boyle, formerly city editor and often a philosophical adversary of Packard's, became assistant managing editor for plans, with more power than he had had as city editor. (Frequently he had powerful allies in publisher Taylor and executive editor William B. Dickinson, the former managing editor who brought Packard in as his successor.)

Shortly after Packard took office there was a brief Czechoslovakian Spring. For the first time in memory there were daily news conferences and an overnight "tout" sheet of stories. "News Analysis" and "*Bulletin* Backgrounder" began appearing on some stories. In sharp contrast to his predecessor's aloofness, Packard whipped off memos for jobs well done. Rangy, gum-chewing Packard, with tie tucked military-fashion in his shirt, was bridging the *Bulletin*'s generation gap.

Packard's battle plan called for an urban affairs editor who would make assignments and generally oversee various urban beats. The editor worked with two young reporters, shepherding their copy into print while others sank or swam in the old quagmire. Finally last fall five reporters were

put under supervision of the urban affairs editor.

Another innovation was "Focus," a feature page 3, edited by a Packard man without interference—until, on appearance of the Knights' Action Line, the two-column Mr. Fixit's Action Line (néé Mr. Fixit) was moved up from page 4. Last summer a high-level, seven-member enterprise committee was set up as a receptacle for all staff proposals, which get discussed, voted on, and finally assigned to a reporter and a specific editor for follow-through. In the fall the old Sunday magazine, reportedly running a \$250,000 annual deficit, was transformed into the slick if innocuous "Discover," patterned after the Los Angeles *Times*' "Home" supplement and run by former *Times*man Dick Dunkel. And, in a bid for younger readers the *Bulletin* turned over its Saturday letters page to a "Youth Forum" and allotted occasional page 3 space to spokesmen for the Woodstock generation.

Packard had talked about developing a national staff, but it started and ended with one "national correspondent" whose proposals for trips kept getting rejected or delayed by Boyle. A personality clash and philosophical differences with the thirty-six-year-old Washington bureau chief, Tony Day, ended in Day's departure for the Los Angeles *Times*. Packard tried going outside the paper for a replacement, but the money the *Bulletin* offered was far below the market rate and he ended up picking his man from inside. (As the new year began the bureau was being expanded to seven members.) Packard also talked of a foreign staff, and staff members with special-area expertise were told to talk with special projects editor Paul Grimes, a former New York *Times* India correspondent. But the idea died.

Last July Packard's inability to deliver on early promises led to a meeting of thirty-five reporters in a midcity apartment. There was talk of a newsroom association, and a committee was appointed to draw up suggestions. There also was discussion of improving urban coverage, holding regular staff meetings, and setting up a representative board of editors and reporters to meet weekly and review the paper. Boyle heard about the meeting while on vacation and saw it as a personal threat. Packard's initial reaction appeared positive, especially to the review board idea. But the publisher re-

jected it and even talked about firing five reporters whom he assumed, incorrectly, had organized the meeting. By contrast, at the *Inquirer* McMullan met with concerned staff members over dinner and for the most part won their support.

Today critics of the *Bulletin* consider police coverage the paper's Achilles' heel. While McMullan has been challenging the traditionally incestuous press-police relationship, the *Bulletin*, its critics say, has been perpetuating it. One night last spring, for example, when police raided a West Philadelphia apartment in search of guns they said radicals were stockpiling for revolution, they were accompanied, according to newsroom sources, by Albert V. Gaudiosi, a Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter. The police, it turned out, raided the wrong apartment. The only newspaper to carry a story was Penn's student *Daily Pennsylvanian*.

Another project, "The New Revolutionaries"—a series by Gaudiosi and Bayard Brunt purporting to expose violence-prone radicals—was viewed by young reporters as a hatchet job directly out of police files: it really was a series about revolutionary rhetoric that failed to link the rhetoric to overt actions—except indirectly, in one instance, to the "trashing" of a TV station by Weathermen, an incident heavily covered when it happened in December, 1969. Gaudiosi has since left the *Bulletin* to become Rizzo's campaign manager.

A writer close to Packard says, "My overall reaction is still one of optimism. [But] it's going to take a long time. Packard never realized the extent of the conservatism at the *Bulletin*. He's finally realized it and he's making fewer promises."

So today, thanks to the arrival of the Knights and some new life at the *Bulletin*, there is compe-

tition in Philadelphia journalism. Moreover, the competition has had visible impact. Five weeks after the *Inquirer*—no longer bound by corporate ties to *TV Guide*—expanded its television guide, the *Bulletin* followed suit. The *Inquirer* used photographs of columnists; so did the *Bulletin*. Both papers have changed in appearance. Both make heavy use of color; the *Bulletin* has dropped column lines and shifted to bolder headline type and mostly horizontal layout, making it less stodgy-looking; the *Inquirer* is using more white space.

Both have spruced up their women's sections and hired new young women's editors. Where the old *Inquirer* women's page emphasized "society" and fashions almost to the exclusion of everything else, it now carries staff features on such fashionable but controversial subjects as women's lib and birth control. The *Bulletin* also had its women's lib series—on the women's page. The blueblood Main Line still outranks multi-ethnic neighborhoods in the *Bulletin's* Evening Chant column, but the section is improving.

The *Bulletin's* decline in daily circulation has slowed, and last year it gained on Sundays, climbing back over 700,000. *Bulletin* Sunday ad lineage (where the *Inquirer* once held a 2-to-1 edge) was also up—12 per cent—while the *Inquirer's* dropped 6.3 per cent in the first ten months of 1970. But Knight Newspapers, Inc., is known for turning poor losers into big-money winners, and McMullan says the news budget at the *Inquirer* was bigger in 1970 than under Annenberg the year before, and will be even larger in 1971.

The nation's fourth-largest city, where freedom of the press was written into the Constitution, may finally be becoming a lively newspaper town.

Which trade paper do you read?

— Editor & Publisher, Sept. 19, 1970 (right),
Publishers' Auxiliary, Sept. 5, 1970 (below).

Few examples of bias found in realty ads

Study charges Washington newspapers with bias in real estate advertising

Notes on the art

Pooled coverage: Small step to a TV news breakthrough?

■ Broadcast news, in its frenetic drive to cut costs, is in danger of cutting away vital bone structure rather than fatty tissue. To discharge veteran correspondents, producers, and cameramen, to cut back on documentaries while lumbering along with outmoded and sluggish methods of newsgathering is not only costly; it ignores the experiences of a decade.

That television news suffers from overexposure and underdevelopment is certainly not due to any professional inadequacy. It is due to an awkward and often archaic system of newsgathering which favors bulk footage and costly duplication, frequently at the expense of interpretive and investigative reporting. Overkill in journalism, as in war, is counterproductive.

The spectacle of a half dozen camera crews and a dozen microphones, several from the same organization, standing tripod to tripod at Andrews Air Force Base to witness the Secretary of Defense's routine departure for a NATO meeting, or to cover S. I. Hayakawa's, Abbie Hoffman's, or George Wallace's latest news conference, often says more about the newsgatherers than it does about the news makers. Such events have news value more because they illustrate the fact that the profession must repeatedly commit its best troops to the urgent rather than to the important in order to avoid being

scooped. The price for such overkill is often paid by missing truly significant stories.

I do not believe that most news directors are afflicted with an unquenchable thirst for violence, or that they are addicted to what Vice President Agnew calls "the irrational driving out the rational in pursuit of controversy." What haunts news directors in their decision-making is the cruel reality that the editor who travels the high road risks being upstaged by the sensational or the bizarre. There are just too many newsworthy events for the available news teams. Duplication in the illusion of competitiveness is a luxury that is sapping the profession of its noblest efforts, depriving the public of its right to know and providing broadcast critics with an exploitable issue.

My purpose is to stimulate a dialogue that may result in a serious study of a more effective use of the manpower, equipment, and funds now available to broadcast news organizations. My proposal is to study the feasibility of creating a nationwide electronic news service. Such a news service would not stifle competition any more than it did in 1848 when AP wigwags told its members that General Zachary Taylor had won the Whig nomination from Henry Clay. An electronic news service would provide broader and deeper coverage. Joint coverage of noncompetitive events would free the correspondents and cameramen for those enterprise assignments which are the very essence of comprehensive, truly competitive journalism. It would free journalists to report news rather than just cover events whose agenda is so often set by publicists. It would make them explainers of complicated issues rather than what a veteran Washington news hand calls journalistic stenographers.

The weekly news budget for Washington, D.C., provides a useful example of the problem, the challenge, and the opportunity.

The daybook of assignments for Feb. 24 in Washington shows an average of about thirty-eight reasonable assignments. They range all the way from fifteen Congressional hearings, two White House briefings, a John Mitchell news conference on drugs, and a Melvin Laird news conference on Vietnam to one with Ralph Abernathy of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. The daybook also included a news conference with the president of the National Farmers Union, a speech by Congressman Charles Rangel, and the opening session of the National Governors Conference.

The three major networks, with five to seven available crews, plus UPI, which serves some nine independent TV stations, must each evening determine which ten to twelve stories they will cover. That decision automatically eliminates some twenty-five or thirty stories. A correspondent, often doubling as arranger-producer, accompanies the crew. Although his assignment is every bit as challenging as that of his newspaper and magazine rivals, his additional production obligations are sometimes undertaken at the cost of content. How much more effective and efficient it would be if the major news organizations set up a common assignment desk utilizing a combined resource of fifteen crews to cover twenty or twenty-five different events. Each news organization would be protected from the embarrassment of missing that routine story which suddenly becomes vital, and various correspondents would be freer to dig, to investigate, to report.

Of course there could and should be unilateral coverage. Just because the point of view of the camera lens is the same does not mean that the reporting must be uniform. The camera coverage of the John Mitchell news conference on drugs and Melvin Laird's display of the pipeline liberated from the Ho Chi Minh trail ostensibly during the recent incursion was interpreted differently on all three networks

even though the pictures were virtually the same. A network with a special interest in a particular story would have more equipment and more staff available for that interview or that special coverage.

One major Washington broadcast news bureau (not the one I used to work with) has an annual film budget of more than \$2 million. I am told that less than 25 per cent of it is earmarked for enterprise, nonroutine coverage.

Film coverage will continue, but more and more the state of the technological art indicates that electronic videcon cameras, live and taped, will be the method of news collection. Senate and House hearings particularly lend themselves to pooled electronic coverage. There is every reason to believe that, as miniaturization and true mobility of equipment improve, a half dozen or more daily videotape remotes may be on the Washington assignment list. And public television, with its implicit virtue of additional and more flexible air time, will provide an increasingly valuable outlet in the utilization and production of some of these pooled Washington happenings. As more and more House hearings open up for TV coverage—as, in fact, coverage of actual Senate and House chamber hearings become a reality—some kind of Washington joint production and distribution will become mandatory.

I am not proposing establishment of a super news agency, but rather a coordinator of assignments who would daily commit available camera crews to the widest variety of news happenings. Maximization of coverage and minimization of duplication would be his chief goal. Wire services by themselves never made a great newspaper, and may have even sapped a few of their vigor. Should broadcast news organizations depend exclusively on such a service, the whole concept would be counterproductive. What is required are more voices—more stories covered comprehensively—not

mountains of film magazines of virtually identical footage.

Should a Washington experiment be judged successful, the concept then could be projected regionally and nationally. In addition to Washington, CBS News has bureaus only in New York, Atlanta, Chicago, and Los Angeles; NBC in New York, Cleveland, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Washington; ABC in New York, Washington, Chicago, Atlanta, Miami, and Los Angeles. Each network, of course, has local, affiliated news organizations, but performance varies, and the method of transmission to New York is cumbersome and expensive.

At the network bureau level the duplication in major cities is costly, not only in assignments unattended but also in the triplication of long lines to pipe what is basically the same story over the same expensive telephone lines to New York. For example, Mayor Daley, announcing that he is or is not going to run for a fifth term as Mayor, would probably have six NBC, CBS, and ABC camera crews, plus an even larger number of radio tape crews all covering his news conference. Under present practices they would use three overpriced electronic lines to New York, while a half dozen or more important Midwestern stories went uncovered. An electronic news service could provide the network news divisions and independent stations with an even broader selection of raw material than now.

As the major wire services are now connected by a network of high-speed teletype machines, the Broadcast News Service or Television News Service or whatever its name would be connected for an hour a day, perhaps two hours some days, with microwave or satellite circuits. At a given time—perhaps at 4 every afternoon and 9:30 every evening—a daily budget of film and electronic pieces, including the choice of perhaps a dozen Washington stories, would be fed into the service. The feeds would not be one- or two-minute takes of the

Secretary of State or the Armed Forces hearing, but conceivably four or five different segments or a ten-minute highlight from which each news producer could make his own selection.

This technique of shared time is now used on international satellite transmissions from Vietnam and the Middle East. In Europe, member broadcasters of the European Broadcasting Union have a daily news transmission. Generally, this is among a consortium of noncompetitive, often state-funded news organizations, and the land distances are much shorter. But there are many lessons in the activities of EBU, and they should be analyzed.

Should a North American news service be successful it could have daily exchanges with similar organizations in Europe and on other continents. The advantages and opportunities for foreign news coverage are, of course, obvious. Currently each of the three American networks has limited coverage in five or six different capitals—generally the same five or six. By pooling camera crews it could double or triple the nations covered; it might even enable the networks to have bureaus in Africa and South America.

Who would operate such a system? How would it be financed? Preliminary judgment suggests a consortium of users who would form a nonprofit organization similar to Associated Press or the News Election Service. They might include the major commercial networks, public television, and those independent stations which desire to fulfill their public service requirements, possibly together with UPI-TN, and Viz. News, the British Commonwealth News Service which exchanges with NBC News.

The current organization of NES might provide a useful model. NES came into being after the 1964 Goldwater-Rockefeller California primary when CBS, NBC, and ABC, in the name of competition and gamesmanship, permitted vote-counting machinery to escalate to

the point where each was employing 22,000 to 24,000 workers to count some 25,000 precincts. Two days after that election, representatives of the three networks and AP and UPI met in my office. The result was the Network Election Service, now called News Election Service, which in every major election since then has provided swift, effective coverage.

Some lawyers raised the alarm then, as they may now, of the dangers of antitrust action from the Justice Department or of reservations on the part of the Federal Communications Commission. The Justice Department's initial reaction and its ultimate conclusion after study was that the American electorate would be better served and that, far from restricting competition, pooling of noncompetitive services would free news organizations, their correspondents, and producers for that crucial journalism where competition *could* make a difference. History has continued to be on the side of NES; I think history and the law will be on the side of the broadcasters news service for the same reasons, including the stipulation that no one willing to pay his share would be excluded.

There may be early opposition from some unions. But I am convinced an economic study will reveal that, although there might be some reassignment of contracts and responsibilities; the more effective distribution of manpower would in the long run better serve all.

Changes and improvements in broadcast journalism have never come easily. In the Thirties CBS and NBC News were really born when the wire services made the grievous error of shutting off their service to broadcasters. A decade later the ban on recordings that so restricted World War II combat coverage was finally broken, not because of the protest of Ed Murrow, who always had to work live with a censor beside him, but because Bing Crosby wanted to be free to record Kraft Music Hall broadcasts

in advance. Then there were those excesses of election night which ended several years later than necessary, and then the pool coverage of some of the noncompetitive portions of space broadcasts.

The opportunity for an electronic news service exists now because the technology is right; because there is a restiveness among some serious observers about the price we may be paying for overkill in the name of Front Page competition; and because the broadcast industry, no longer the fat cat it once was, cannot afford to waste either its resources or time.

The place to begin is Washington. Bill Small called his book about broadcasting from the capital *To Kill a Messenger*. This proposal is intended to liberate that messenger, to get him off that ancient motorcycle caught in a traffic jam racing his rivals to the airport—and permit him to concentrate on the content of his mission.

FRED W. FRIENDLY

Fred W. Friendly, former president of CBS News, is Edward R. Murrow Professor of Broadcast Journalism at Columbia and television adviser to the president of the Ford Foundation. His comments are adapted from a speech at the University of Michigan in March.

The presidential press conference: status report

■ Last Dec. 29, three weeks after President Nixon had held his first press conference in four months, Herbert G. Klein, his director of communications, said on the New York Times Opposite-Editorial page:

In a Washington hotel, three days before the President's Dec.

10 conference, twenty-five members of the national news corps met to discuss the coming confrontation. Following that meeting, some participants returned to their newsrooms and studios and spun out "news" stories about what had occurred at the meeting, and in those stories they voiced their own professional grievances about the infrequency of their meetings with the President. This raises an interesting question of ethics and public practice: Should the newsmen be using their positions in the communications media to advance their personal complaints that they are not getting enough shots at the President?

Following that pre-conference, some of the reporters who were there took pains to say they were not part of a cabal or conspiracy and that in no way did they discuss either the order or the subject matter of the questions that would be asked at the forthcoming conference. Whether or not they did, the timing of the meeting did nothing to enhance press credibility.

This kind of broad-brush innuendo—and indeed the whole question of the propriety of the reporters' meeting about which Klein complained—may be dismissed in the general press as inside baseball. But for newsmen it was a significant chapter in the continuing dialogue over the concepts and purposes of the Presidential press conference. It also went to the heart of the relationship that exists today between the Administration and the Washington press corps. Accordingly, as part of the chronicle of the evolving fate of the Presidential press conference, it may be instructive for one of the organizers to review how that meeting came about, what was said, and how the meeting related to the subsequent press conference.

For months before the President's Dec. 10 conference, a crescendo of press complaints and criticism about the inaccessibility of Mr. Nixon had been building [see "Salvaging the Presidential Press Conference," Fall, 1970]. Articles lamented that Mr. Nixon had held

fewer conferences than any predecessor going back at least to Herbert Hoover. Even before the White House announced the Dec. 10 conference, Washington reporters had been discussing whether it would be helpful to have a meeting of their own. When the announcement came, I joined with William McGaffin of the *Chicago Daily News* and Stuart Loory of the *Los Angeles Times* in exploring possible interest in such a meeting. Ultimately we invited what we thought and hoped was a representative mix of Washington correspondents who cover Presidential press conferences.

Of thirty-five reporters contacted, twenty-nine said they wanted to attend. Among them was Peter Lisagor of the *Chicago Daily News*, president of the White House Correspondents Association; but an assignment prevented him from being there. He associated himself, however, with all the objectives. Two reporters for the *Washington Post*, one for the *Baltimore Sun*, and one for the *Hearst Newspapers* checked with their superiors and stayed away; one for *Newsweek* elected on his own not to attend; one for the *New York Times* was sent as a reporter. In retrospect, perhaps in our concentration on ensuring that the group was not the hated Eastern Liberal Establishment Press, we erred in not including any blacks and women.

In advance of the meeting, John Osborne of *New Republic*, James Deakin of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, McGaffin, Loory, and I had lunch and discussed general areas of interest we thought should be raised. We asked Osborne to chair the forthcoming meeting and we agreed to suggest that the discussion be placed on the record.

At 8 o'clock the next morning, Dec. 8, the reporters gathered in a small conference room in the Washington Hotel, about two blocks from the White House. A free-wheeling, on-the-record exchange ensued in which most if not all of

the reporters present participated. A clear consensus emerged that the answer to most press conference woes was greater frequency, and that the President ought to be asked whether he would consider holding more frequent sessions. Pertinent to Klein's later suggestion about ethics, there was long and serious discussion about the propriety of reporters' taking time in the first Presidential press conference in four months to ask a question of this sort. Most appeared to agree that disintegration of the press conference through disuse threatened its survival, and hence made the matter one of public interest.

There was some talk about how the subject should be broached, and by whom. One suggestion was that the senior wire service reporter, Frank Cormier of Associated Press, who was present, lead off with it. But others observed that wire reporters usually are under discipline to ask a hard-news question from which an early wire lead can be written, and that it would be unfair to compromise Cormier's freedom of choice by asking him to pose the press conference question. A consensus developed that any reporter could raise the question, if he were so inclined.

There also was considerable discussion about the quality of reporters' performance, specifically on followup questions. One White House regular suggested that if a reporter remained standing after he had asked his question and while the President was answering, he would have a better chance to ask a followup question. Others discussed the need for reporters to be more alert to the flow of questions, to recognize the need for followup, and to forego asking prepared questions if they deemed a followup more important.

No votes were taken, and it was emphasized that all participants were leaving as they had come: free agents with no commitments to anyone about anything discussed. To emphasize that the reporters

had gathered openly and in a constructive spirit, John Osborne went directly from the hotel to the White House, where he personally informed Presidential press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler of the meeting and its purpose. Subsequently, at his morning briefing, Ziegler was asked who had attended. Organizers of the meeting immediately provided the names of all participants, to be placed in the official White House transcript of that briefing.

After Mr. Nixon's press conference two days later, there were varying opinions about whether the reporters' meeting, and all the columns and articles about the quality of the press conference, had made any difference. One effect was to inspire better preparation by many Washington bureaus. Many—but certainly only a fraction—of the important issues that had emerged over the previous four months were posed to Mr. Nixon. Again, however, there was no followup of questions inadequately answered.

All the prior discussion about the need for followup did not adequately allow for the President's tight control over the conference. He recognized those reporters he wanted to recognize, usually familiar faces. Of the first eleven reporters recognized, for instance, the President called ten of them by name. Once he called on Herbert Kaplow of NBC while Kaplow was seated, not even trying to ask a question. The President had just recognized Dan Rather of CBS and Tom Jarriel of ABC, and when Kaplow said he wasn't ready, the President observed: "I just didn't want to discriminate against the other network." He came back to Kaplow later, for the eighth question of the conference, and Kaplow, who had been at the reporters' meeting, asked him whether he felt that "public interest" might have justified a news conference "before the four months between the last one and tonight." Mr. Nixon replied in part:

Mr. Kaplow . . . I believe that I have a responsibility to the members of the press. . . . But I, as President, also have a primary responsibility to do my job.

My job is, among other things, to inform the American people. One of the ways to inform them is through a press conference like this. Another way is through making reports to the nation, as I did on several occasions about the war in Southeast Asia. Another is an interview, an hour's interview with the three anchormen of the three networks, which mainly dealt, as you may recall, on Southeast Asia. I feel that all of these are useful ways to inform the American people. . . .

However, I would certainly be open to suggestions from members of the press as to how we could make better use of the news conferences without dominating the television too much. . . . Perhaps we need more conferences in the office; perhaps more one-on-one; perhaps more—some have suggested a television conference in which instead of the anchormen we have three of the top columnists. But you make the vote. . . .

Lisagor, as president of the White House Correspondents Association, on Jan. 4 wrote Mr. Nixon that most of his colleagues believed "many of the problems associated with format would be eliminated by more frequent and regular news conferences," and paraphrased Walter Lippmann that the Presidential press conference "in whatever form and however imperfect, is 'not a privilege but an organic necessity' in our system." Lisagor also included a proposal submitted as representative of the thinking at the Dec. 8 reporters' meeting: that "the President hold regular weekly meetings with the press, the first of which would be a full-scale televised conference; the second and fourth, stand-up conferences in his office; and the third a full-scale untelevised conference." This "would oblige the President to answer questions on television only once a month, yet it would put him on the

record weekly." The White House response, on Jan. 19 from Ziegler, was evasive:

The President is pleased, as am I, that the White House correspondents responded seriously to his invitation for ideas about improvement of press conferences. Their constructive and thoughtful memorandum, enclosed with your letter of Jan. 4, will receive the most careful consideration. I won't attempt to discuss here the merits of this issue. Our reply to the correspondents' memorandum will come mainly in the form of continued efforts to maintain and improve news policies which are of mutual benefit to the public interest, the President, and the press. Finally, to your paraphrase from Walter Lippmann, I would rejoin: It is free and open communication between the President and the people that is an organic necessity in our system; that is the end, and the press conference is but one of many means, alternative and complementary. . . .

This last contribution from Ziegler, an advertising and public relations man before entering the White House, is a restatement of the Herb Klein theme lumping press conferences with Presidential speeches, messages, remarks, and letters as part of the whole communications effort. Klein may not see the distinction, but reporters whose loyalties are not mixed do.

For example, the APME Washington News Committee, commenting on Ziegler's reply, observed in a Jan. 31 report:

There is common agreement that the President must communicate with the public in many different ways. Only the press conference, however, we must insist, enables the questions on events which are in the public's mind to be asked directly of the President in a timely way. . . . The phrasing of Mr. Ziegler's letter which appears to attempt to divide the public from the press is open to considerable question. The press has its faults, ethical

and commercial, but it must insist on its "right to know" for the public's good.

On New Year's Eve, the President called in for an attributable chat eight newsmen who happened to be in the White House press room. It was hardly a press conference, but it was press contact. So was his one-hour interview with four network correspondents four days later. And on Feb. 17—regrettably, ten weeks after the previous press conference—the President called reporters into his White House office for a forty-minute conference, with no TV.

Fifteen days later, on March 4, the President reverted to the full-scale televised press conference, but with a limitation of questions to foreign policy, thus allowing more concentrated interrogation and more followup than usual. Then came a flurry of media contacts, including interviews with British journalist Peregrine Worsthorne, New York Times columnist C. L. Sulzberger, nine women writers, Barbara Walters of *Today*, and Howard K. Smith of ABC-TV. Then, another lull.

Although it is too early to tell, it may be that there has been progress. The critical question remains what it always has been: Is it in the public interest for the President regularly to answer directly to the public through the press for the manner in which he is conducting the public's business? If so, then it is also in the public interest for reporters most directly involved in eliciting those answers to meet openly and talk about how that end can be achieved—the chief government press agent's views on journalistic ethics notwithstanding.

JULES WITCOVER

Jules Witcover, of the Los Angeles Times Washington bureau, writes regularly for the Review.

APME's 'Guidelines': a women's review

■ The other day we received a copy of "APME Guidelines: An Informal Study of Various Aspects of Journalism as Practiced by Those Who Direct the Gathering of News for American Newspapers (emphasis ours)." The looseleaf book was compiled, according to its publisher, the board of directors of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association, "for persons concerned with newsroom executive problems [and was] written by men. . . ."

The book is produced on good quality paper, has attractive drawings, is well laid out, and no doubt answers a number of questions about which managing editors are frequently troubled. It is, however, perhaps unintentionally, the most blatantly sexist document to appear in our office for some time.

There are seventy-six drawings depicting animate objects. Of these, fifty-nine have as their subject matter men, singly, in pairs, or in groups. Only ten drawings include women. The remainder are miscellaneous drawings of newspaper carriers, a pig, etc. A description of the ten that include women:

PAGE 8: A grouchy woman (old) complaining to what is obviously a very important man that her paper wasn't delivered.

PAGE 11: A woman appears in ecstasy over the women's page.

PAGE 17: A woman reporter (along with two male reporters) is being congratulated on a job well done by a male boss.

PAGE 22: A freak female (accompanied by her freak husband) is trying to get a notice of her wedding in the paper. (The fact that the man in charge of taking such notices is hiding behind his desk shows another kind of bias on the

part of the straight press which should perhaps be considered on another occasion.)

PAGE 23: A fulltime drawing of a harried women's page editor talking on the phone. She says, "Your babysitter's sick, too?" Presumably she is speaking to an unreliable (because of the needs of her children) female employee.

PAGE 24: A female figure in front of a clock showing how women spend their time. (Whether this picture should even be counted is questionable, as it is difficult to determine whether the woman is an object or is supposed to represent a living person.)

PAGE 30: The central character is a male with a female secretary on either side of him.

PAGE 39: Perhaps the most offensive of all, it depicts women working in the news library; one of the males in the picture is obviously "boss" of this operation, the women the hired help; one man is introducing himself as "Dewey Decimal" and he has "been hired to shape this place up," the several other men are demanding things of the women. In one of the dialogues taking place the man who is apparently boss is saying to one of the females, "This job isn't too hard . . . can you clip and file?" to which she is replying, "Sure . . . just lookit these nails," displaying her fingernails.

PAGE 46: An unpleasant looking woman with a man behind a desk. She is perhaps being interviewed for a job, though it is hard to tell.

PAGE 55: In the background, barely sketched, are a couple of female secretarial types. This one hardly counts as having women in it at all.

And what, in the fifty-nine pictures with men, are they doing? In thirty-three at least one man is sitting behind a desk (in a position of authority presumably), they are being deferred to, consulted, harassed, in at least three of them by women depicted as stupid), and giv-

ing orders. They are, in other words, all acting out their roles as persons of responsibility.

None of the women are in comparable positions of authority, with the possible exception of the women's page editor (p. 23); and her biggest problem, apparently, is coping with unreliable female employees. The women depicted are flighty and stupid (p. 39, for example), incapable of having jobs of responsibility (implicit all through the drawings by the fact that none do hold such positions), best suited to be secretaries (because that is the role so many of the depicted women are in), irascible.

Pandering to stereotypes is not only offensive; it is very damaging to women and very damaging to the concept women have of themselves. That APME should be so irresponsible in this area, whether intentionally or not, is more than annoying; it is disgusting.

A look at the text of the book, however, proves, if anything, to be even more annoying, more disgusting, more offensive.

The most obnoxious work is on page 68, FOR MEN: TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR WORKING WITH WOMEN. RULE #2: "Avoid impatience with a woman, she *needs* to have confidence in you." Why on earth should a woman *need* to have confidence in a man; confidence in herself is, as it is for men, quite sufficient.

RULE #3: "What ego is to a man, security is to a woman, make her feel safe and needed and she'll make you feel 10 feet tall." In other words, women, unlike men, do not need responsibility and fulfillment; they only need security. And, of course, the fact that the male writer wants women to make him feel 10 feet tall speaks for itself.

RULE #8: "As a man, provide the reason, the authority, and the security to direct a woman in the use of her constant emotional drive." To have this canard—that women are not reasonable—given a stamp of approval by the Associated Press is tiresome beyond words. The im-

plication that women need the constant help of men in the areas of reason and authority is so ridiculous to be almost beyond comment.

RULE #9: "Praise a woman on every possible occasion, her appreciation is fourfold that of a man. So is her sensitivity, she requires one-fourth the criticism." Delicate creatures women are.

To demonstrate the perniciousness of these commandments, substitute the word "child" for woman and the word "adult" for man in each of the ten.

The same individual who treated us to these ten commandments goes one further and presumes to tell women how to deal with men. Called FOR WOMEN: YOUR DEALINGS WITH MEN, the item appears on page 73. In it he suggests "The first and most important commandment for women in dealing with men and the foundation for all others is this—Be pleasing in ways suitable to the time, the place, and the man." Nothing about ability, talent, etc. No, of course, the first rule for women is to please a man.

"Be willing," it says, "to subordinate your personality . . . to make a man *feel* like the boss." This, of course, says something about the fragile egos of men but it does not explain why a woman, engaged in the pursuit of her career, should concern herself with such things.

Our expert refers to the "natural" prejudice men have for women. He cautions women about their temper, as though men did not have tempers of equal strength; he plays on the old stereotype of women as untrustworthy where secrets are concerned; he assures women that they should stand their ground in an argument with the boss but implies they must know with absolute certainty they are right (no such rule, of course, has ever applied to men); and, finally, the writer says, "Be proud of being a woman, even though at work you have to be better than a man to be considered as good. As a woman,

you have one tool in your kit that, used properly, will compensate for all the unfairness you suffer. That tool is charm."

Once again the author does not explain why a woman, seriously engaged in a career, should have to resort to the use of sexual games to pacify men too stupid to recognize their own prejudices, men whose prejudices are so deeply ingrained, so much a part of their everyday lives, they cannot recognize them.

On the same page with the suggestions on how women, playing sexual games, can survive in a world of irrational men, appears the following "cute" item: "Girls are like newspapers. They have forms, they always have the last word, back numbers are not in demand, they have a great deal of influence, they are well worth looking over, you cannot believe everything they say, they carry the news wherever they go, they are much thinner than they used to be, every man should have his own and not borrow his neighbor's."

There are a couple of positive or at least neutral references to women. On page 20 there is the acknowledgement that some newspaper people are women: "By the time he or she is ready to intern or graduate. . . ."

On page 35, in an excerpt from a treatise by Saul Pett, AP Special Correspondent, Pett credits Mary Margaret McBride, whom he calls a "great interviewer," with teaching him a very successful interviewing technique.

On page 36 there is the offhand remark that the method outlined for training desk persons (called "desk men" in the headline) "has worked well with more than 900 men and women." Women? Women on the desk? Fancy that!

There are no doubt other references which are not objectionable, but there are hundreds more references to the male role which are.

The fact that this book was put together by "those who direct the

gathering of news for American newspapers" is a sad commentary on the state of American journalism and its relationship to women's rights. It also accurately reflects the way women are treated by too many newspapers.

We women have as much talent as men. We women are as smart as men. We women are as rational as men. We women are as competent as men. We women are as responsible as men. We women, like men, are dedicated when given some reason to be dedicated.

The most frequent rationalization for withholding positions of authority from women is that single women are likely to marry and give up their jobs; married women are likely to give up their jobs because of pregnancy or similar "family" reasons. This may be true. No wonder. The unexciting, unchallenging jobs usually given to women under this rationalization do not weigh very heavily on a scale of alternatives (even when one of those alternatives is to stay at home, engage in dull housework, and attend to a two-year-old all day). In other words, almost anything is better than being a typist.

If a capable woman is given a job with responsibility and pay equal to her ability, a job with some challenge, a job in which she can respect herself as a journalist (or whatever) and can take pride in her work, she will think twice about leaving it for the first alternative that comes along.

LEONA DURHAM, AMY CHAPMAN,
CHERYL MILLER, DEBBIE ROMINE,
DIANE HYPES, JAN WILLIAMS,
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The writers are, respectively, editor, managing editor, editorial page editor, associate city/university editor, photography editor, associate photography editor, librarian, and assistant to the editors of the *Daily Iowan* at the University of Iowa. Their comments are adapted from a letter to APME.

Notes on the underground

WILLIAM L. RIVERS

THE OPEN CONSPIRACY. By Ethel Romm. Stackpole. \$6.95.

FAMOUS LONG AGO. By Ray Mungo. Beacon Press. \$5.95.

THE UNDERGROUND PRESS IN AMERICA. By Robert Glesing. Indiana University Press. \$6.50.

■ Anyone who is guilty of being forty-five years old, as I am, is probably so afflicted with the tunnel vision of his generation that he can judge other generations only by his standards rather than theirs. Thus, for a long time I dismissed the underground press because it seemed to have all the stability of a floating crap game. My opinion began to change because of these events:

- The Los Angeles *Free Press* installed a time clock. I didn't like time clocks when I had to punch one twenty years ago, and I wouldn't like to punch one now. But an underground paper that begins to check on the comings and goings of its staff members takes on a businesslike aura that might lure a smile from William Randolph Hearst.

- The owner of the Berkeley *Barb*, Max Scherr, and his staff began to fight over money. The staff wanted to buy out Scherr and cited evidence that he had been making \$5,000 a week from the paper. Although reading the *Barb* fairly regularly persuades me that I do not share many values of Scherr and his staff members, this financial wrangle

suggests that they share at least one of mine.

- Citizen Zenger Company, publishers, of Fairfax, Calif., has issued a prospectus for a kind of *Reader's Digest* of the underground press. In keeping with the casual underground spirit, some of the pages are numbered and some are not. But the prospectus is thick, it seems to cover all the factors that might bear on the success of the venture, and it reflects a serious effort to raise \$100,000 to start the *Underground Digest*. Reading these plans sets me to wondering whether, like these entrepreneurs, DeWitt Wallace was foresighted enough to copyright *his* prospectus.

If these examples are almost embarrassingly commercial, that is because the instability of the underground has caused me so much trouble that I welcome any sign of order and purpose. A recent book of mine titled *The Adversaries* carried a long analysis of an underground paper that folded while the book was being bound. In another recent book, *A Region's Press*, David Rubin and I attempt to assess the newspapers of the San Francisco Bay area. Because this area's climate seems to spawn publications and then smother them with a fine impartial hand, I often found myself agonizing over analysis of an underground paper that had died the day before. All this leads to pondering a dictum of the late Ed Lahey that I had once dismissed as impossibly cynical: "All I ask of a publisher is that he stay solvent."

There are other reasons to regard the under-

William L. Rivers, a professor in the Department of Communication at Stanford, is the author of *The Opinion-makers*, *The Adversaries*, and other books.

ground press as something more than a fad—among them the fact that the field is beginning to generate an impressive library. It began to build early last year with Ethel Romm's *The Open Conspiracy*, which imparts the spirit and the flavor of the underground unforgettably. Filled with pungent quotations, *The Open Conspiracy* offers wide-ranging samples of underground literature without either leering or moralizing. Mrs. Romm quotes classified ads:

ATHLETES BEWARE! New girl in town bored with old methods seeks new ways to play same old game with bigger and better toys. Send photo and suggestion to P.O. Box 650, San Leandro, Cal.

She also quotes one of the most famous underground articles, Gerald Farber's "The Student as Nigger," which has been widely reprinted since it was first published in the Los Angeles *Free Press*:

Students are niggers. When you get that straight, our schools begin to make sense. It's more important, though, to understand why they're niggers. If we follow that question seriously enough, it will lead us past the zone of academic bullshit, where dedicated teachers pass their knowledge on to a new generation, and into the nitty-gritty of human needs and hangups. . . .

Although Mrs. Romm is sympathetic, she is by no means a blind partisan. She even questions whether the young journalists deserve the honor of the name "underground," pointing out that it was a term for the anti-Fascist resistance press of Europe and that *those* undergrounders risked their lives if they were caught, for example, with a copy of *L'Italia Libera*. To use the term "underground" for papers that can be purchased on newsstands seems absurdly romantic to Mrs. Romm.

Famous Long Ago is similarly flavorful, and it offers the perspective of a participant who writes well. It is a sort of autobiography of Ray Mungo, one of the founders of Liberation News Service, which is a sort of syndicate for the underground press. Mungo devotes four pages to his early life and what Holden Caulfield termed "all that David Copperfield kind of crap." The rest of the book is an intensely personal view of the underground world. Much of it is refreshingly candid, as when Mungo confesses:

Lots of radicals will give you a very precise line about why their little newspaper or organization was formed and what needs it fulfills and most of that stuff is bullshit, you see—the point is they've got nothing to do, and the prospect of holding a straight job is so dreary that they join "the movement" (as it was then called) and start hitting up people for money to live, on the premise that they're involved in critical social change blah blah. And it's really better that way, at least for some people, than finishing college and working at dumb jobs for constipated corporations; at least it's not always boring . . . that's why we decided to start a news service—not because the proliferating underground and radical college press really needed a central information-gathering agency staffed by people they could trust (that was our hype), but because we had nothing else to do.

Mungo's criticism of himself and his friends is at least a mild reproach to Robert Glessing's *The Underground Press in America*. For although this is in most respects the most valuable book on the underground press, Glessing, who is well over thirty, is much more inclined than is Mungo to hear the ring of truth in all the shouts and protests of the young rather than to consider them coldly and decide that while some deserve respectful attention, at least a few of the protesters are lazy, much of their journalism is sloppy, and many of their causes are nonsense. Glessing dedicates his book to Bob Dylan.

It is a bit irritating, too, to find ragged grammar of the sort typified by "Youth who is barraged" and "gave rebellious American youth the voice they sought." Even if a search should turn up one authority on usage who cites "youth" as a singular and another who considers it a plural, the word is not both at once. It is unlikely that these examples (both from Page 56) are typographical errors. Page 58 carries: "As the underground *press* looks at America's leaders in 1970, what do *they* see?" On Page 62: "In the beginning, *SDS* was . . ." and "One month after *SDS* had aligned *themselves*. . . ." Page 64: "Once NSA was disaffiliated from government funding, *its* large membership was eligible and *were* expected. . . ." The italics are very much mine.

Such blemishes are almost inexplicable in a work that is otherwise attractively written and solidly researched. Trying to comprehend the full dimensions of the underground press is like trying

to capture a cloud, but Glessing writes confidently and, as nearly as I can determine, accurately about the size and character of this amorphous world. Far better than either Mrs. Romm or Mungo, he covers causes, graphics, audiences, and influences.

Glessing also provides a useful definition of undergrounders: "created to reflect and shape the life style of hippies, dropouts, and all those alienated from the mainstream of American experience. In one sense it can be said that underground newspapers are written *by* the alienated *for* the alienated." This definition is a broad canopy that covers the *Guardian*, the *Movement*, the *Los Angeles Free Press*, the *Barb*, the *Rat*—and, indeed, most of the splashy little publications that most of us stereotype as the underground. But it properly fails to cover the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, the *Texas Observer*, and the other doughty little papers that challenge the Establishment through tough reporting and analysis.

Glessing is convinced that the underground press is markedly influencing the mainstream of American journalism. He points to several evidences: the undergrounders cover stories that are later covered by the conventional media; many writers and editors work for underground and overground media simultaneously; and conventional media are used by undergrounders to create and perpetuate myths.

It is impossible to measure the extent to which daily editors have pirated or adapted the ideas and practices of the underground, but both piracy and adaptation are apparent. Some of them now print Dr. HIPpocrates, the unorthodox physician whose medical advice column started in the *Barb*, and some print the work of Nicholas von Hoffman, *Washington Post* columnist who did not get his start in the underground but whose irreverent columns would fit in the most radical sheet. Many editors, recognizing that underground papers build close and enduring relationships by speaking directly to their readers and serving them, also are expanding the space given to readers' letters, starting "Action Line" and similar columns, and trying desperately and somewhat awkwardly to use the printable language of youth.

All this is not enough for the young reporters on many conventional dailies, who feel so shack-

led by the restraints of traditional journalism that they echo Ben Bagdikian's point that "trying to be a first-rate reporter on the average American newspaper is like trying to play Bach's *St. Matthew's Passion* on a ukulele: the instrument is too crude for the work, for the audience, and for the performer." There seems to be no real consensus among them as to exactly how journalism should be transformed, but almost every American newspaper of stature and pretensions to excellence harbors reporters who envy the free-wheeling style of the underground.

It is much too early to predict confidently that the underground press will, like the minority party, succumb because its strongest appeals are taken over and diluted to the point of mass palatability. But that may be happening. What is surely happening is that some of the strongest underground papers are succumbing to the lure of conventional success—or at least ignoring the radical dictum that financial failure is the ultimate consequence of serving Truth. The *Village Voice*, which was founded in 1955 and is generally considered the pioneer underground paper, was once the very epitome of the journal written by the alienated for the alienated. It is now disdained by most underground editors as "safe" and too respectable to deserve their respect. *Rolling Stone* and the *Los Angeles Free Press* are disdained by some and suspected by others, largely because they are so successful that they *must* have sold out.

This much is certain: there is a growing awareness that a vast distance stretches between conventional dailies and important segments of their potential audience. In the time when many newspapers served many small publics, an editor spoke directly to the central interests of his readers. But as papers became larger—in part by swallowing their rivals—the editors tried to corral even larger audiences, which meant that they could neither appeal very strongly to one group nor offend another. The marketplace of ideas began to look more and more like a common denominator, and irreverent thoughts were replaced by the safe conventional wisdom. A change there is, and it would be stupid to ignore the underground press in searching for its cause.

Books

Turner Catledge's 'Times'

BEN H. BAGDIKIAN

MY LIFE AND THE TIMES. By Turner Catledge. Harper & Row. \$10.

□ Turner Catledge, who was managing editor of the New York *Times* from 1951 to 1968, must have saved every memo that ever crossed his desk. It's an appalling thought. But his book is full of the evidence. (Publisher Arthur Hays Sulzberger in the 1950s to Catledge: "On the way to the barber shop this morning I noticed that there are new lights at 50th Street and Lexington Avenue. Have we had a story about them?")

There is, throughout the book, yet another special flavor of the *Times*, that peculiar and wonderful quality of *Times* people who seem to undergo a religious experience when they join that newspaper. "When I walked into the lobby of the *Times* building," he writes, "I felt a sudden thrill, a shiver of pride, just at seeing the elevator operators with THE NEW YORK TIMES inscribed on their caps. That was more than a quarter of a century ago, but today, as I return to the *Times* each month for board meetings, I still feel the same thrill, and the same sense of gratitude to my fellows and my fate."

Catledge has the reputation of a "good old boy," in the remarkable tradition of the Southern Mafia of American journalism, a group that generally has a humble, genial, country-boy manner that conceals a shrewd calculation. His memoir confirms

Ben H. Bagdikian, who has written frequently for the *Review*, is assistant managing editor for national news at the *Washington Post*.

this, showing a relaxed manner which overlays a driving ambition that presses him relentlessly into congenial relationships with power dealers in national politics and his own organization. He knew where he was going and conditioned his behavior accordingly. He took insurance with all the current and potential leaders of his paper and cashed in his premiums when the crucial time came.

What he did with this meticulous accumulation of power is important. Like all such operators he had to wheel and deal, and not all of it is as noble as he makes it sound. During the Joe McCarthy era's right-wing attack on the *Times*, he undoubtedly put up a fight for the *Timesmen* who "co-operated," but he also agreed that it would be prudent to toss others out to appease the wolves. The *Times* consulted with J. Edgar Hoover and it reacted in panic to the leaked malice that appeared in Walter Winchell's gossip column. It is easier to be contemptuous of such behavior now than it was in those paranoid days, but it is not an episode in which anyone came out looking noble.

Catledge did preside over important changes in the evolution of the *Times*. It was under Catledge that the *Times* attempted to end its past organization as a loose federation of independent duchies—C. L. Sulzberger as independent viceroy without portfolio; the Washington bureau as an independent journalism institution; the Sunday paper as a publication with a similarity of name that happened to be printed in the same plant; and the night editorial bullpen that captured the soul of the paper after the sun went down. That struggle has not ended, but if the *Times* is more unified and if that is a net gain, as it appears to be, then Catledge must get credit.

More important, it was during his regime that the paper ceased trying to be a New World version of the *Times* of London both in style and policy. In style it was no longer an editorial triumph if all the stories sounded like Ph.D. theses on the cell physiology of paramecia. It was under his pressure—and Ted Bernstein's—that the paper attempted to make news stories sound like humanoid messages.

Even more important, the *Times* began moving away from the self-image of its English namesake, the good gray counselor and steward of govern-

ment policy. In the Bay of Pigs episode the *Times* printed information that could have upset government plans for an invasion of Cuba, but not all of it soon enough. Nevertheless this is an important marker on the path toward independence from various establishments. That, too, is not yet ended.

Does an important newspaper have an obligation to assume the responsibilities of government or to perceive consequences of its public acts? Must a newspaper decide beforehand what will be the total result of everything it prints, and then print news only if the result will be "good" but suppress it if the news will be "bad"? Or does a newspaper decide what is true and significant and then share it with the readers? Is it arrogance to print news that is true and significant but seems likely to produce damage? Or is it arrogance to assume that anyone, newspaper editors included, can predict the goodness and badness of truthful information? If a paper decides to withhold significant information from readers because it believes that readers individually or collectively will react "badly" then a paper has taken the turn in the crossroads that eventually leads to its becoming an instrument of official policy, or a shadow government of its own. It has also adopted a patronizing attitude toward its readers and its society.

The *Times* still has strong vestiges of a philosophy of government partnership, but whatever its sources, Catledge participated in a trend in the opposite direction. In the history of the *Times* and of all newspapers this may be the most important step taken in this generation to try to preserve the commercial press as a truly independent institution. It is a trend, of course, that underlies the rage and contempt of Mr. Moynihan and Mr. Agnew and others associated with the Administration.

Catledge discusses these things as individual cases rather than general philosophy, and that is both the strength and weakness of the book. It is a strength because there is a modesty of approach that avoids being overly cosmic and addresses itself, in the tradition of news, to specific detail. It makes the detail believable and real. But it is also a weakness. One minor form of this is a great deal of trivia—the specific stopovers he takes on various trips, for example. There even are stylistic touches that must cause Mr. Bernstein to wince.

As a case history in American journalism it is less valuable than Gay Talese's intimate peek (Catledge's book makes it more clear than ever that Catledge and his files were a major source of the Talese account). As an institutional history it is less valuable than Meyer Berger's. It is a view of the *Times* by a cautious but intelligent establishmentarian who has enough personal spirit to make the account entertaining.

Books noted

EDITORS MAKE WAR: SOUTHERN NEWSPAPERS IN THE SECESSION CRISIS. By Donald E. Reynolds. Vanderbilt University Press. \$10.

□ This massively researched, tightly written volume by a young history professor at East Texas State puts the editorial mind of the South under scrutiny during the fateful, fevered months that led to the Civil War. It is a work that gives journalists, no less than historians, an awesome example of the frailties of the human spirit under stress. In this setting, the stress stemmed from sectional differences and gave rise to such intense feelings that no editor could insulate himself from the heat. In our own time, the stresses multiply, polarization is a watchword, and one wonders whether, when another Sumter looms, editorial equilibrium will prove any better.

FREE PRESS/FREE PEOPLE: THE BEST CAUSE. By John Hohenberg. Columbia University Press. \$9.95.

□ In the tradition of the *New Yorker*, which simply announces books of interest by members of its editorial family, the *Review* notes publication of this volume by Columbia Professor Hohenberg, made possible in part by a grant from the Knight Foundation. The book begins with a world survey of the struggle for freedom of expression since Gutenberg, then focuses more sharply as the author approaches the present.

LOUIS M. STARR

Unfinished business

Indochina Lessons

TO THE REVIEW:

You are to be congratulated on your Vietnam issue [Winter, 1970-71]. It makes for inspiring and frustrating reading. Inspiring, for the overall depth and candor displayed, and frustrating for the sense of missed opportunity. To a great extent the media are repeating, every day, the mistakes and omissions reported so well in the *Review*.

The *Times* in February mentioned mortar fire causing deaths which were witnessed by reporters but not reported. Have the counting methods been looked into?

Of the reduction in U.S. forces, how much is real, and how much is semantic? Are naval forces counted? Bomber crews? Air force support personnel on Saipan? CIA personnel? How much of "Vietnamization" consists of actual change, and how much is rhetoric?

The *New Yorker* has mentioned the effects of defoliation, in articles, and of relocation, in an editorial. Why hasn't this been followed up?

A number of these questions have been touched on. However, it seems to me that news media responsibility consists not only of discovering the facts, but in making the public functionally aware of them. To the extent that the populace believes an untruth, the media have failed.

ROBERT GELMAN
Lafayette Hill, Pa.

Mr. Nixon and San Jose

TO THE REVIEW:

I must take exception to Mel Wax's erudite article ["Incident at San Jose," Winter, 1970-71].

I stepped out of the auditorium in San Jose just ahead of the President and was appalled at the size of

the crowd, the wildness of its language, and the obvious anti-Nixon attitude that prevailed. I was supposed to get in an automobile just behind the President's car, but there was great confusion among Secret Service agents, police, and others running around, and when the President did not come out for a few minutes it seemed to me to be the better part of valor to move.

Carl Greenberg [Los Angeles *Times* political writer] suggested I ride in the press bus, as it was also going to Air Force One. (I was returning to Orange County with the President.) The bus was parked near the edge of the crowd. I was narrowly missed by an egg and a couple of small stones that hit the bus.

When the Presidential car finally started they quickly made a wedge through the crowd, and I could see missiles in the air, seeming to come from back in the crowd. A number struck the car. One Secret Service agent or policeman seemed to be pushed against the car. I would rank the attitudes of the crowd as definitely violent. It seemed silly to me that so many people, with an obviously negative attitude, should be allowed to come so close to the Presidential party.

The bus in which I was riding was the one marked *PRESIDENTIAL PRESS*. I would say that approximately twenty rocks hit the window I was looking out of, but none of them broke it. Some of the missiles that struck the bus had to be the size of bricks, because they made a tremendous noise, and I could see some large dents in it at the airport.

To give the impression that the incident was used to present an unfair depiction of the President being faced with violence is, in my judgment, bad journalism. Any reasonable person who can put aside his politics would have been frightened and most impressed with the violence of the crowd and the action it did take. Had the President's party lingered a few minutes longer before making its departure, we would in my judgment have had to face a great deal of violence.

DENNIS E. CARPENTER
State Senator, 34th District
Orange County, Calif.

TO THE REVIEW:

I left the San Jose auditorium at almost the same time the President did. I was surprised to see demonstrators, who upon our arrival had been safely located outside the auditorium parking lot, massed within a few yards of the buses and Presidential car. I observed that some missiles, silhouetted against the lights, were being thrown.

I ran for a bus marked *WHITE HOUSE PRESS*. The bus, which I subsequently learned was the second of two White House press buses, sped through the parking lot. Shortly before the bus turned out of the lot the windows on the left side were hit by missiles which splintered them and, from at least one window, produced splinters of glass within the bus. By my count, at least six windows were shattered.

Many persons in the bus were TV cameramen or soundmen and at least one expressed the opinion that he wished he could have a picture of what was taking place. Another passenger remarked that the light wasn't good enough to get a picture anyway, and others (perhaps campaign-weary) didn't seem interested at all. But there was enough concern that the bus driver, who was exceptionally skilled, was cheered at San Jose Airport.

As I recall discussion of the rock-throwing on the plane to San Clemente, no one questioned the reality of the event. It was only in the subsequent briefing, when the press pool treated us to that marvelously inaccurate evaluation by Senator Murphy that the incident "couldn't hurt" his campaign, that skepticism began to occur.

Some important questions still have never been answered. Chief among these is how and why the demonstrators, safely chanting four-letter words from outside the parking lot when the rally began, were allowed to approach so closely. There are also unanswered questions about the preplanning, if any, between the Secret Service and the San Jose police force prior to the visit. The answers are shrouded in official silence. But I am aware from my own experience that impartial assembling of the evidence would

preclude any investigator from deciding that "no violence" occurred.

LOU CANNON
Washington Bureau
Ridder Publications

TO THE REVIEW:

Mel Wax reiterates a quotation flatly denied by its source, Jane Franklin of the Bay Area Revolutionary Union. The *Stanford Daily* quoted her as saying, "A riot will begin at 5:30 at Seventh and San Carlos in San Jose." I immediately questioned the quote. Within a few hours of its publication she called and said the word she had used in a phone interview was "rally." We relayed this to local papers.

As an individual who observed the San Jose demonstration, I was somewhat puzzled at relaxation of police efforts to keep the crowd out of the parking lot.

Members of the White House press corps who were shocked and puzzled by having their bus windows broken were in no position to sense the strong antipathy among demonstrators to the use of the buses to shield the President on his arrival, surrounding his vehicle like Conestoga wagons in the Old West. While this can be understood as a security measure, it also clearly symbolized the radical contention that the press is simply another part of the Establishment.

ROBERT W. BEYERS
Director
Stanford News Service
Stanford University

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Wax comments, "The important point in the context of the story is that the *Stanford Daily* quoted Jane Franklin (even if erroneously) as predicting a riot. That plus the rally at San Jose State College and the request of demonstrators for a parade permit were cited as evidence for my statement, 'That there was a demonstration in San Jose should have come as no surprise to anybody.'"

Reviews, Not Press Councils?

TO THE REVIEW:

I read with interest Norman Isaacs' article, "Why We Lack a National Press Council" [Fall, 1970]. Mr. Isaacs' heart is clearly in the right place, but I wonder at his emphasis on the need for such a council—especially one set up by the American Society of Newspaper Editors. It seems that there is a better way to provide a check on the nation's newspapers.

I refer to the local journalism reviews which have sprouted in some dozen American cities over the past two years, following the lead of our *Chicago Journalism Review*. These reviews are, for the most part, put out by working reporters, and aim at a general audience in commenting on mistakes of editors and publishers. These reviews possess no power other than that of exposure and embarrassment, but this is considerable. As a result, our review and others have become the natural local repository for complaints about the press.

The efforts of Norman Isaacs and others to set up an ASNE press council would, I think, be far better directed at setting up some sort of fund to aid and foster local reviews. Most reviews, like ours, are in financial trouble; and most, again like ours, refuse to accept support from local media.

DAN ROTTENBERG
Managing editor
Chicago Journalism Review

The GI Underground

TO THE REVIEW:

Regarding "The Underground GI Press" [Fall, 1970]: There are, according to my research, at least forty underground military newspapers published for GIs, including nine outside the United States (Germany, France, Japan, and Sweden). GI editors I have had contact with estimate about fifty papers, and there may be thirty more.

In mentioning approval for dis-

tribution at Ft. Eustis, Murray Polner perhaps should also have noted the case of *Bragg Briefs*, Ft. Bragg, N.C. GIs United Against the War in Vietnam had four times requested permission to distribute the paper on base in summer, 1969. They had been turned down without explanation. They brought the issue to federal district court in North Carolina, arguing that their first amendments rights were illegally being restricted. Judge Algernon Butler ruled that the base commander could conclude, as he did in an affidavit, that *Bragg Briefs* "presented a clear danger to the loyalty, discipline, and morale of [my] command," and that the order not allowing base distribution was based on regulations which were Constitutional.

BARBARA F. LUEBKE
Wisconsin State University
Eau Claire, Wis.

Disservice to Aronson?

TO THE REVIEW:

I have just seen *CJR's* inexplicable note on James Aronson's *The Press and the Cold War* [Winter, 1970-71]. How can you dare to treat an important book in so condescending a way?

No one else has touched the area thoroughly canvassed by Aronson. He says that the press had a leading role in selling Americans the biggest hoax of the century, the Communist Menace. But you merely say that he should have done more "field research."

Aronson's book will be noticed in very few papers if at all: the press's usual method of dealing with criticism of itself. But I thought that *CJR*, with its pretensions to scholarly and impartiality, would manage something better than this superficial whimper, which I can only consider an effort to keep the magnates and moguls convinced that *CJR* is sound.

W. H. FERRY
Santa Barbara, Calif

REPORT ON REPORTS

Summaries and reviews of current literature in journalism

"The Presidency and the Press," by Daniel P. Moynihan, *Commentary*, February, 1971.

In a much-commented-upon, controversial article, a former adviser to President Nixon opines that if the balance between the President and the press "should tip too far in the direction of the press, our capacity for effective democratic government will be seriously and dangerously weakened."

"The Good 'News,'" by Edwin Diamond, *New York Magazine*, February 1, 1971; "The Sun's Not Yellow, It's Chicken," *Harry*, February 5-18, 1971.

Diamond, a media critic for the *Post-Newsweek* stations, argues that changes in the staffing, makeup, and coverage of the *New York Daily News* have brought about a "recent resurgence as a journalistic force"; a current employee of the *Baltimore Sunpapers* spells out reasons for staff dissatisfaction with the prestigious *Morning Sun*.

"Advocacy Comes to the Newsroom," by Kathryn Kenyon, *Freedom of Information Center Report* No. 250, School of Journalism, University of Missouri, October, 1970; "Activism and Advocacy," by Malcolm F. Mallette, Recruiting and Training Committee of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association; "A Debate: Do Newsmen Have the Right to be Political Activists Off the Job?" Seminar, December, 1970; "A Case for Professionalism," by Harry S. Ashmore, *Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors*, November-December, 1970.

Miss Kenyon, an MA candidate at Missouri, presents an intelligent overview of reporter activism; Mallette, of the American Press Institute, concludes from a limited-response questionnaire that the "philosophy of activism and advocacy is probably not pervasive on American daily newspapers but is widespread geographically"; the Copley newspapers' house organ reprints the articulate, reasoned views of *Wall Street Journal* reporters A. Kent MacDougall and Fred L. Zimmerman; and Pulitzer Prize-winner Ashmore argues for enduring "the peculiar loneliness that comes of marching alongside a movement and not being of it."

"City Magazines, Past and Present," by Ben L. Moon, *Journalism Quarterly*, Winter, 1970.

The director of publications at the Georgia Institute of Technology ascribes to these specialized publications "a more serious intent" than ever and a future that "seems strong."

"The Black Reporter and His Problems," by M. L. Stein, *Saturday Review*, February 13, 1971.

A survey by the chairman of New York University's Department of Journalism finds that "black reporters in daily newspapers are deeply frustrated" as a result of a role conflict, and urges action "to prevent a bad situation from becoming worse."

"Autopsy of a Labor Daily: The Milwaukee Leader," by Elmer A. Beck, *Journalism Monographs*, No. 16, August, 1970.

An experienced labor journalist and onetime reporter for the *Leader* engagingly chronicles the history of one of the most important labor dailies.

"They Found Newspapers Best After All," *Business Week*, December 26, 1970.

An informed discussion of the diversification of the Times-Mirror Company, to which "a funny thing happened . . . on its way to major diversification outside the newspaper business: it made more money than ever from newspapers."

"The Industry Line," by A. Kent MacDougall, *Wall Street Journal*, January 13, 1971.

Echoing critics who charge that "many of the specialized business, technical, and professional publications that constitute the trade press are the most disreputable" in American journalism, staff reporter MacDougall pinpoints the venality and economic instability of much of the field.

"Television," by Harry Rasky, *Nation*, February 15, 1971.

A veteran documentary filmmaker, in a highly charged personal statement, offers "a eulogy for truth as it was once broadcast on the American air" and suggests requiring that every network "carry at least an hour of documentary films on prime time each week" or be shut down.

"How Will Television Feel After It Gives Up Smoking?" by Martin Mayer, *Fortune*, January, 1971.

A noted and prolific commentator on contemporary subjects provides illuminating insights into "today's jerrybuilt market for television time."

"How Police Infiltrate the Press," by Ron Dorfman, *Chicago Journalism Review*, January, 1971.

A penetrating, well documented indictment by the *Review's* editor argues that journalists should protect their integrity by exposing "on the spot, any undercover agent they find posing as a newsmen."

DANIEL J. LEAB

the lower case

BUT, OH THOSE REST ROOMS

Martha Denies Anti-Tree Position

—Kalamazoo, Mich., Gazette, Oct. 28, 1970.

BSA Exploring Extended To Include Teenage Girls

—Today's Post, King of Prussia, Pa., March 15.

Mrs. Gandhi stoned at rally in India

—Toronto Star, Jan. 16.

Giants Neck To Get Water

—The Day, New London, Conn., Jan. 11.

Appealing Rape Case Discussed

—Austin, Tex., American-Statesman, March 21.

Col. Richard Calkins, commanding officer of the Air National Guard, 146th Military Airlift Wing, Van Nuys, which served as command post for emergency Armed Forces assistance if needed, said more than 200 Army truck water trailers and 24 water purification units were ready to be employed in the disaster area by blaa blaa balaa.

—Los Angeles Times, March 21.

director, said the rally will be held at the Jewish Community Center at 8 p.m.

He called on all free loving persons, both Jew and Gentile, to appear at the rally as a show of strength and a protest to the lack of freedom for Jews in Russia.

—Springfield, Mass., Daily News, Dec. 30, 1970.

The bullmastiff, bred to guard the large British estates and game preserves from preachers in the late nineteenth century, is in increasing demand today to

—New York Times, April 8.

ness of Liberty.

On the reverse, there is an eagle and a wreath with berries. Actually, she was a 19-year-old Philadelphia girl, Miss Anna Williams, selected as a model by the well-known painter, Thomas Eakins.

He as said to find

—New York Times, Jan. 2.

Among the strong trends in bathrooms are seats in tubs so the bather can show sitting down.

—Kenosha, Wis., News, Sept. 26, 1970.

Policeman Was in Trouble, Bystander Sarterd Shooting

Jerry Mayo wanted to be a policeman but decided the work was "too dangerous!"

Wednesday, the sharp-shooting 25-year-old carpenter joined a gun battle to save a policeman's life.

"I only did for him what I'd expect someone else to do for me," Mayo explained.

Mayo of 31 Mt. Zion Road was working on the door of a house at 670 Magnolia St. NW, when he looked up and saw a traffic officer stop a car occupied by two men.

"They started back to the police car and I saw one of them pull a gun and take the officer's revolver," Mayo said. "He cocked back the hammer on the gun."

"He meant to use the gun, too."

A Fulton County special deputy sheriff, Mayo carries a .38 caliber revolver. He drew the

gun and fired from a distance of 50 yards.

The bullet felled the suspect, who still had a gun in both hands.

"He shot the officer," Mayo said. "Then he shot at me twice. Then he started windmilling his arms spraying bullets everywhere. I shot at him again."

For a bullet wound in the leg, inflicted officer said after Thomas's shutdown.

Mayo, who served in Vietnam and Germany during a four-year military stint, says he "prtty goo" with gun.

"I've had experience with them," he said.

Mayo said he considered join

the lice free after being discharged from the Army but gave it up as

"BEING A DANER- OUS." "They're shooting a you from both sides and police force" hemmled. "The rocks and the ptticimldn't stand that."

Mayo said he is convinced that more good citizens than you tink' are willing to shoulder responsibility in an effort to combat crime.

"I think the goos ought to have the right to go armed," he said. "The other kind do. But I huss it could be diffilt job if indout

just who was who." Mayo, married and the father of two small children, figures he did a civi duty

n going to the assistance of policeman in trouble. "If the same set of circumstances developed, I'd d

it again," he said. "I'd expect someone else to do the same thing if I was in that ix."

Smallest in U.N.

The smallest member of the U.N. presently is the Maldives Islands, with a population of 106,000.

—Atlanta Constitution, Dec. 10, 1970.

Second reading

Why a review of journalism?

■ What journalism needs, it has been said time and time again, is more and better criticism. There have been abundant proposals for professional study panels, for institutes with squads of researchers, for critical journals.

Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism has decided to attempt such a journal. Two considerations brought about the decision: First, the need, magnified in a critical era like this, for some effort to assess the performance of journalism in all its forms, to call attention to its shortcomings and its strengths, and to help define—or redefine—standards of honest, responsible service. Second, the obligation that falls on a serious professional school—a graduate institution, national in character—to help stimulate continuing improvement in its profession and to speak out for what it considers right, fair, and decent.

Columbia's Faculty of Journalism cannot pretend to Olympian qualifications. It does combine the detachment needed to be reasonably impartial with the professional experience needed to sense what is possible and what is not. It can also draw upon the vast experience of its parttime teaching staff and its alumni, as well as upon the growing number of alert, inquiring minds within journalism and informed critics from outside.

All the proposals for organized criticism—whatever their intent or merit—point to one conclusion: that there exists, in and out of the profession, a widespread uneasiness about the state of journalism. The School shares this uneasiness, not over any supposed deterioration but over the probability that journalism is not yet a match for the complications of our age. It believes that the urgent arguments for a critical journal far outweigh the hazards. In launching this experiment, the School has set for the Review these goals:

To deal forthrightly with what it finds to be deficient or irresponsible and to salute what it finds to be responsible, fair, and professional.

To discuss all the means that carry news to the public, thus viewing the field whole, without the customary partitions.

To provide a meeting ground for thoughtful discussion of journalism, both by its practitioners and by observers, to encourage debate, and to provide ample space for dissent.

To attempt systematic studies of major problems in journalism, drawing not only upon published sources but upon new research and upon correspondents here and abroad, including many of the School's alumni active in the profession.

To recognize that others (like *Nieman Reports*, *Journalism Quarterly*, the *Saturday Review* and, in some ways, trade publications like *Editor & Publisher* and *Broadcasting*) have been doing part of the job and to acknowledge their work in the Review's pages.

As a division of a large private university and as an institution that has mediated between the academic world and journalism for nearly fifty years, the School is committed to no single interest beyond its belief in good journalism and graduate education for journalism. The School has tried to prepare more than 2,500 graduates for careers in journalism. Now it believes it is time to try to assess the field they have entered.

No single issue of this publication will satisfy all the editors' standards—least of all this first pilot effort. But the Review will try to emulate all sincere journalism by coming as near the whole truth as possible.

—Reprinted from 'Columbia Journalism Review,'
Pilot Issue, Fall, 1961.

